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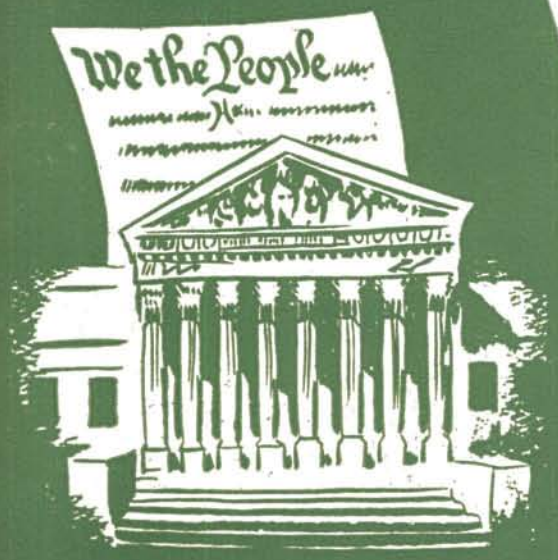

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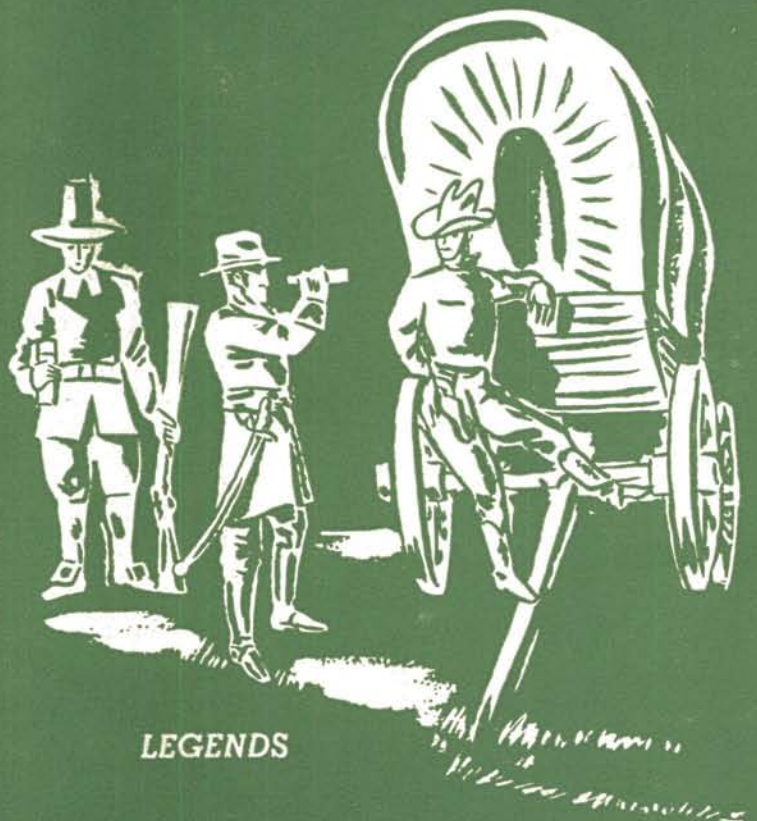

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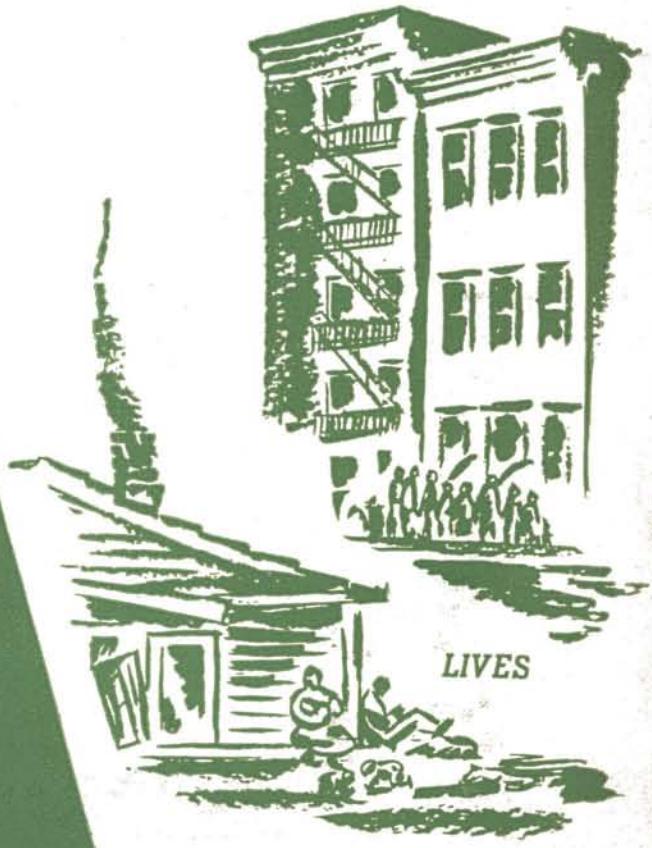

LIVES

VOLUME XV NUMBER 23

APRIL 3, 1937

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English Ebb, American Flow

BY GEORGE DANGERFIELD

A COMPARISON between the American and the English novel today is like a comparison between two tides, one rising, one receding. I say "tides," because tides turn, and there is no earthly reason to suppose that anything so essentially vital and original as English fiction will remain for long in a state of retreat. It is in retreat now for reasons less concerned with art than with society; it does not want to move into the future, it is marking time: and the longer it marks time, the more perceptibly it slips backward. It is a relief to pick up a book like W. H. Auden's "On This Island," which is poetry of a very high order, advancing poetry:—

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM AND JOHN P. MARQUAND

O love, the interest itself in thoughtless Heaven,
Make simpler daily the beating of man's heart; within,
There in the ring where name and image meet . . .

And make us as Newton was, who in his garden watching
The apple falling toward England, became aware
Between himself and her of an eternal tie.

For now that dream which so long contented our will,
I mean, of uniting the dead into a splendid empire,
Under whose fertilizing flood the Lancashire moss

Sprouted up chimneys, and Glamorgan hid a life
Grim as a tidal rock-pool's in its glove-shaped valleys,
Is already retreating into her maternal shadow.

This is English literature at its best, rooted and renewed in a tradition which is national, topographical, climatic; moreover, it looks forward.

It looks forward. Oh yes, it is easy for a poet to prophesy, one expects it of him; his vision naturally leaps to islands beyond the horizon, and takes little account of what lies between—the sand-dunes, the bitter levels of the sea, though Mr. Auden, as a matter of fact, is very conscious of these. But why should a novelist look into the future? The novelist, unfortunately, is not only a creator but a critic, a critic of society; and though his criticism is secondary, he cannot afford to neglect it for any length of time.

Usually he is not expected to. The English novel has to a very considerable extent run parallel to the growth of English democracy and just a little ahead. It has had a liberal tendency, and from Charlotte Brontë to H. G. Wells and John Galsworthy has been inclined to ask questions and contemplated reforms. There is a formula for the growth of English democracy which might run—Adam Smith, Gladstone, David Lloyd George. There is, of course, another formula — God, Disraeli, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain (to which the counterpart in the English novel begins, perhaps, with Jane Austen and ends with Kipling). The two formulae are not always separate; they weave in and out, to the consternation of historians: but between them they denote an atmosphere of hope, expansion, experiment, in which the novelist was permitted to say what he pleased, within the fairly elastic limits of good taste. The sins of high society, the sad condition of prisons, the wretchedness of the poor—they all could be dwelt upon with passion and without impropriety: the future would take care of them, the limitless future of middle-class democracy.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER AND JOSEPHINE LAWRENCE

ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL AND JOHN STEINBECK

But if the future no longer offers security, the English novelist is not acceptable in his role of critic—not even to himself. If one was asked quickly, "What are the chief subjects of contemporary English fiction?", one might answer as quickly, "Sex and snobbery." Such quick answers are not worth much: but if we modified this one into "Human relationships and social distinctions," it might stand. As for human relationships, Virginia Woolf was doing pretty well in "Mrs. Dalloway," and I wonder whether it was discouragement or some new preoccupation not yet altogether revealed to us which turned her towards "Orlando" and "The Waves." Discouragement with what? That is where the social distinctions come in.

The genius of the English novel is middle class; and the middle class society from which it springs is exceedingly intricate. The rector's wife just tolerates the doctor's wife, who in turn would not be seen dead with the dentist's lady, while the dentist's lady is in league with the bank manager's wife to snub the Baptist minister, who feels himself superior to the fishmonger, who could probably buy them all out. In big towns these distinctions are less easy to detect, though they exist, and, as we have all learned in the late abdication proceedings, there are areas in London society where everything seems to melt into everything else, to the disgust of the Archbishop of Canterbury. But this acutely differentiated society still dictates the behavior of the nation; its conscience permeates the classes above and below: and in the last years, with the future more and more uncertain, it has decreed that nobody shall lose his head, join in the hysteria of Europe, or admit that there is such a thing as the possibility of change.

The decree has been extremely successful, but the novel is beginning to

Next Week

THE YEARS
By VIRGINIA WOOLF
Reviewed by George Stevens

CAREERS AFTER FORTY
By WALTER B. PITKIN
Reviewed by Mabel S. Ulrich

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show signs of fatigue. No wonder Mrs. Woolf has taken refuge in fantasy and the past. That highly intricate society is closing in, closing in, demanding that attention be paid only to itself, and not to those large areas which lie around it, and in which the future may be discerned. Here is Arthur Calder-Marshall's "Pie in the Sky." With such a bitter title, you might expect something rather drastic, and Mr. Calder-Marshall does, in fact, examine the activities of some English communists. But in the end you discover that his main preoccupation has been with a man who falls in love with his father's mistress, a predicament which he illumines with great skill and sensitivity and not without relief. (I have just been reading John Steinbeck's "In Dubious Battle," and the difference in approach is revealing. Mr. Calder-Marshall peers into radicalism with a certain condescension—like a man looking at a strange piece of water with sympathetic interest but through a lorgnette: Mr. Steinbeck gets himself into a diving bell, and, for good or ill, descends.)

"Pie in the Sky" is not an important novel, but it is symptomatic. One might almost say that the English novel as a whole lay in the grip of that most difficult of all censorships—the censorship of its own conscience. The novelist feels, perhaps, that certain aspects of contemporary democracy—let us say, to take an exaggerated example, the coalfields of South Wales—are uninteresting, or unrewarding, or too difficult. He doesn't say outright—"It really isn't the thing to write about *them*." The coalfields of South Wales contain the future, so does the dole, which Walter Greenwood's novel, "Love on the Dole," anesthetized: but one need not be doctrinaire about the subject matter of fiction. One need only realize that if the novel is unwilling to admit that things are "not otherwise but thus," that is, to look into the future, it will soon cease to move at all; or rather, its motion will be circular, like a snake biting its own tail.

The English novel for the past few years has, indeed, been engaged in restating much the same middle class pattern. The pattern is often very subtle, often beautiful, but it has never ceased revolving around its intellectual formulation in "Point Counter Point." Some writers give you more of it, some less; its endless and tolerant variations include Mr. Chips at one end and Christopher Isherwood's Mr. Norris at the other: but the longer it revolves, the more it seems to fall under the spell of conscience, and the more it gives out a certain air of disillusion.

At the top this disillusion may be cerebral, when it becomes Mr. Huxley, or spirited, when it becomes Mr. Somerset Maugham; at the bottom it is spiritual, and moans away into "Sparkenbroke." Mr. Maugham has already made two important contributions to the art and substance of fiction, and now that he is with us again with "Theatre," it seems gratuitously unkind to greet him with the label "bourgeois." What is wrong with bourgeois fiction? Nothing at all, unless it reaches that stage of imaginative penury in which it is fond of people only because they are not nice, and expects nothing more from society except an endless repetition of the same thing. Mr. Maugham is a knowing writer, and in "Theatre" he is out to surprise us. He likes to surprise us with his language—"On the way out he seized the opportunity to pinch her bottom"; and he hopes to surprise us with his characters. Michael Grosselyn is handsome and unselfish, but he is also cold and parsimonious; Roger is merely using Tom, and Tom, who starts out as an engaging romantic, is after all only a mean little snob, so it is really only fair that Julia should revenge herself on him by ruining Avice's career. And how surprised we might be by all this, if only Mr. Maugham himself were capable of being surprised! But nothing catches him off his guard—except, perhaps, the very good or the very bad, which he avoids: he is as incapable of surprise as he is incapable of writing badly or telling a poor story. "Theatre" is extremely diverting, but it is already a museum piece. "English social life, *circa* 1937. Please do not touch." If you touched it, though now all of one piece, it would crumble into dust: it is very brittle.

Hope returns with Sylvia Townsend Warner's "Summer Will Show." The novel is superbly English, original, elegant, witty, subtle: English above all in its author's cautious approach to the subject which is nearest her heart. She regards the future with excitement, and reaches it through the year 1848, in Paris, in the blood bath which followed the abdication of Louis Philippe. The novel is far from perfect: the transition of the heroine from English lady to Parisian revolutionary is, at its turning point, abrupt as a dream; the scenes of violence are more a series of attitudes than a continuous movement. But here is art, emerging from the shadow of conscience. You wonder if the close pattern of English fiction will ever break, admitting barbarity, astonishment, even despair. Then Mr. Auden writes a few poems and Miss Warner a story, and you begin to see that England contains the pattern, not the pattern England.

The story of modern (as distinct from contemporary) English fiction could be summed up in a parable: a railway train invades the unmechanized world of Miss Austen and Miss Mitford, and in one compartment sits Mr. Trollope writing about the clergy, in another Mr. Dickens writing about the poor, in a third—but you get the point. The English

(*Continued on page* 26)

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Man Against the State

BREAD AND WINE. By Ignazio Silone. New York: Harper & Bros. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

SILONE became known in this country through his remarkable story, "Fontamara," of a little Italian village that tried to resist fascism and Mussolini. "Bread and Wine" is a much more ambitious work, and quite as dramatic and as human. It is not propaganda, although it will be represented as such; it is an intensely human study of men of good will and men of liberal instincts caught and crushed by a mechanical, inhuman bureaucracy. Mussolini and his rhetoric is far away from this novel, indeed by many of these poor people he is regarded as a frustrated hero, a prisoner of his own acts. Nor are the revolutionaries, who in constant peril slip in and out of secret places trying to arouse the workers and the peasants against tyranny, represented in this novel as heroes and martyrs. They also, and especially Spina the chief figure of the story, are frustrated minds, uncertain of their course, sure only that they must be sacrificed. Only the Italian bureaucracy, fed upon propaganda, cruel from fear, and thinking only what the radio tells them to think, are single-minded in action because they have become a vast inhuman machine.

The martyr in this novel is Don Benedetto, the liberal priest, who sees the students he has loved and worked with all his life become parts, or victims of this machine, or hunted rebels against it. He is the priest of the little village of Rocca, and Rocca with its stubborn, stupid peasants is the old order where, instead of by force, one kind and wise Christian tries to save and educate by persuasion. The tragedy of Italy is his tragedy. When his light goes out, something has been lost from European culture that may not be relit in our time.

I will not try to trace the complicated story, which is a narrative of escapes and conflicts, but most of all a remarkable series of character studies of peasants, revolutionaries, and devoted women. There are extraordinary scenes, such as the arranged celebration in the village square when the great propaganda machine stages the Abyssinian war:—

> . . . The first hoarse mutterings of the magic apparatus [the loud-speaker] passed unnoticed; but a loud shout arose from the groups of carabinieri, militia, and members of the government party, a rhythmical cry, an impassioned invocation of the Great Chief. " . . . CHAY DOO! CHAY DOO! CHAY DOO! CHAY DOO! . . ." This chant was slowly taken up, first by the women and boys, but gradually it spread until the whole mass of people . . . had taken up the melancholy hieratic refrain: . . . That name which nobody dared pronounce privately, either in praise or blame, because to name it brought misfortune, they now shouted with all the force of their lungs in this general gathering, in the presence of his feared image, in the presence of the patriotic fetishes, as a piece of propitiatory magic, in a kind of religious frenzy. . . . Those nearest the loud-speaker motioned to the crowd to be silent, so that the speech from Rome might be heard, but the people massed in the adjacent streets went on intoning the magic invocation, calling on the Great Chief, the Witch-doctor, the Thaumaturge, who disposed of their blood and their future.

The unfortunate hero, Pietro Spina, disguised as an itinerant priest, carries drama with him wherever he goes. He is trying to feel the pulse of suppressed Italy, and what he learns is that human nature will not protect itself by reason, that the peas-

IGNAZIO SILONE

ant will follow him as a supposed miracle-working holy man, but distrust him as a friend of the workers, that both fascism and anti-fascism are ideologies which have not yet come as close to life as the Christian tolerance and good will of Don Benedetto.

The title of this novel is symbolic. It is the bread and wine of the sacrament of the love of fellow men, which is the only effective agent of revolution against a triumphant bureaucracy organized to sacrifice man to the state. It is not effective in this novel. Don Benedetto is poisoned by the sacred wine with which he performs his last mass. Pietro Spina, seeing all his attempts at an undercover revolution to be futile as well as a failure, escapes across the snow mountains, while the Catholic Cristina, following after in the hope of saving his life, is caught by wolves in the mountains, the ruthless wolves of the state.

And indeed this novel is not a tract, and offers no solution. It is a picture, extraordinarily sympathetic for an exile like Silone, of a great country in the grip of a ruthless will to succeed that has crushed every other will and now runs on the momentum of the mechanical force it has created. In spite of the tragedy depicted, it is also a humorous book, and often tender and very touching. And its long discussions of politics and social policy are so absorbed in the story and in the characters of every contemporary Italian type that even the most fiction-minded reader will take them as an inevitable reality in such a scene. I have no way of estimating the accuracy of Silone's portrait of present-day Italy, nor the justice of his accusations against both radical revolutionary and bureaucratic fascist. But there is no mistaking the truth of his characters; they speak for themselves, and especially his peasants and his priests. And there is no mistaking his moral either, which is that the ultimate struggle is between men of good will and wisdom, like Don Benedetto, and men of ill-will and calculating ambition, like the leaders of a militant bureaucracy determined to make the state a machine that knows neither right nor wrong, nor pity, nor happiness, nor love.

Autobiography of a Civilization

IT'S A FAR CRY. By Robert W. Winston. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

JUDGE ROBERT W. WINSTON has written three or four notable books. His life of Andrew Johnson was one of the first biographies to recast American opinion about an unfairly discredited American President. His life of Jefferson Davis made a kindlier, more understandable picture of a figure in American politics that could have grown nowhere else than in the far South. His biography of Robert E. Lee made a human being out of an idol. In this autobiography, Judge Winston thinks he is telling his own story. But the autobiography is something more than a man's story. It is the autobiography of the South from the period of the war between the states until the climax of the turmoil and calamity that followed the Versailles Treaty.

Judge Winston, being a Southern statesman, is an old-line Democrat, conservative, intelligent, broad-gauged, the type that once was designated as a scholar and a gentleman. The book is not written in the grand manner, for there is much stark realism in it. But it is written in the classical manner. It is full of erudition, sprinkled with quotations from Shakespeare, from the British poets, from the Greeks. But the author is no visionary. He sees the truth about his "sweet, sunny South far away" and tells about it. Also he faces its problems without flinching. He bewails the one-party

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system in the South. And he squares off to the race problem. He tells the story of an address he made entitled "Garlands for Ashes" in which he stirred up a great commotion in the South because he told what he felt was the straight truth about the social and political backwardness of the region and made suggestions which he felt would improve it—suggestions for better race relations.

Naturally, a man with Judge Winston's attainments, with his courage and his vision, would get on, would rise in his profession, would be able to see above his immediate horizon. His work took him to New York where he became a lawyer of distinction and nationally a man of parts. He was a friend of the great during the last three decades and had important relations with the builders of the new empire that is the South today.

In his sixties he did a curious thing. He went to his alma mater, the University of North Carolina, reëntered as a Freshman, and took his college course again. The chapter that recalls that interesting episode is one of the most significant in the book. That little story in its way symbolizes the intellectual rebirth of the new South. The story of Judge Winston at Chapel Hill is the story of the rise of the young writers of the South, a score of them who are explaining the South candidly, sometimes cruelly, but always understandingly and at base with sympathetic kindness. They and the Judge in his sixties returning to his youthful spring of learning and culture epitomize the glory of a new day in the South. Indeed, any chapter in the book may be taken as the biography of a civilization as well as the story of a man's life. Probably no other Southern writer of the social, professional, and political standing of Judge Winston ever has spoken about the race problem with such candor.

The reader must not expect in this book a work of literary perfection but he can look therein for an account of a unique region, an account that is honest, authentic and at times with obvious faults, genuinely delicious and enjoyable.

In Pursuit of an Idea

JORDANSTOWN. By Josephine Johnson. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by BERNARD DEVOTO

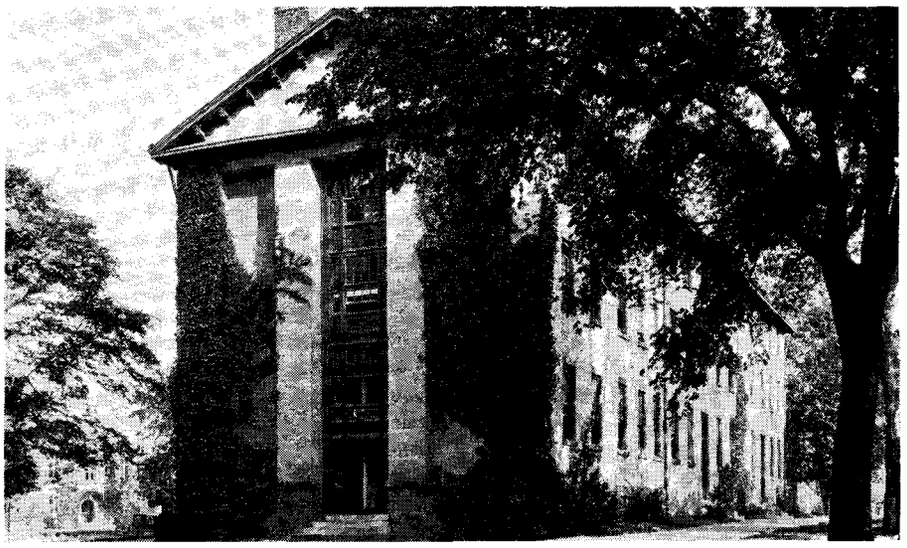
"NOW in November," Miss Johnson's first novel, was disregarded by many critics until it received the Pulitzer Prize, and most of those who noticed it ignored its principal strength and devoted themselves to praising its one ominous weakness. Accessory elements of "Jordanstown" provide the reviewers a chance for similar irrelevance.

In "Now in November" and the stories collected in "Winter Harvest" the ominous element was a fondness for rendering the setting—seasons, weather, light effects, foliage, vegetables—in mannered prose which always stopped short of preciosity but frequently threatened not to stop short. "Jordanstown" is not as good a novel as "Now in November," but this tendency does not appear in it; the self-mastery thus attested is important in the development of the novelist and for all lovers of American fiction. Miss Johnson's conspicuous strength, as revealed in her earlier work, was twofold: an intensity that enabled her to write a dramatic scene more briefly, tellingly, and poignantly than most novelists of twice her age, and a rich fantasy that dealt with the terrible and the horrible quite as naturally as it did with autumn leaves and the kitchen garden. There, in the charged, compact drama of the human soul encountering the fundamental experiences of terror and ecstasy, was Miss Johnson's finest gift and her greatest promise. "Jordanstown" is likely to be praised and condemned because it can be called a proletarian novel, but that approach to it is irrelevant. It is less of an achievement than "Now in November" because Miss Johnson has forsaken her instinctive best in order to pursue an idea. That the idea originates in a compassion the most nearly universal of our time does not alter the fact that it is extraneous to what is deepest and most native in her as a novelist.

The book deals with the disinherited—the maimed and broken, the poor, the unemployed—with their suffering, their fellowship, their exploitation and betrayal, and their efforts to help themselves. But it is not always set in the tangible and pitilessly rendered world where Miss Johnson's earlier characters awaited rain or inflicted cruelties on one another; more often it escapes into a world where pity and suffering are not objectified in human character but become a kind of poetry and symbolism. As a result, it is not fused; it is not the unmixed and therefore final experience that "Now in November" was, but a sequence of fragments, at times beautiful or almost intolerably poignant, but fragments nevertheless. That rich and individual fantasy gives us vivid scenes—people fighting for contaminated food burning on the city dump, the undernourished vomiting the food they steal, disease and death in the midst of prohibited plenty and withheld healing, violence and brutality economically and expertly directed at the reader's nerves—but it does not give us the achieved singleness of a novel in its own terms. That charged intensity gives us sudden fundamental insights and moments of character completely realized, passages where the thing is seen and done perfectly—but it does not give us a whole. The characters slide out of realization into symbolism; what they do and say lapses from the experienced to the theoretical and argumentative; what we live through with them gets transposed into what we are merely told about them in the form of poetry and pity.

Why? At a guess, because Miss Johnson has been glad to sacrifice the artist to the human being. She has written her novel out of what her nerves tell her about our time, not out of what her instinctive self knows about life. She has chosen to abandon what only she can do in order to do what she is not best fitted to do and what many others can do who cannot possibly compete with her in her own domain. This is passionate, polemical, and poetic reporting but it is still reporting—and it is not done by a trained reporter. Journalism may gain something but fiction is much poorer. There are plenty of reporters, there are plenty of better reporters, but novelists like Miss Johnson can be found only in the high places, above timberline.

Such a choice confronts many artists these days: whether to follow their own instinctive development or to do violence to it for the sake of humanity. No one can deny the power of the appeal to immo-



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late oneself when that development is not in harmony with one's hatred and fear of immediate suffering. But Miss Johnson, in her first novel and in fragments of this one, is a novelist not only superior to most of her generation but immutably separated from them by the sharpest sort of individuality. She is superior to them and separated from them not as one who hates injustice and suffering but as one who knows the depths and dark places of the soul—depths and dark places to which most of "Jordanstown," including its principal effort, has no relation at all. The loss of a first-rate psychological novelist is too high a price to pay for a second-rate sociological novelist, or even a first-rate one.

One reef threatened her development,, a literary preoccupation with inanimate nature and with mannered prose. "Jordanstown" shows that she has steered safely away from it but shows also that another reef threatens her course. Even if she insists on steering straight for it she may well write fine books. But if she avoids it, if she returns to the kind of fiction that she was unquestionably destined to write, she may be the foremost woman novelist of her generation.

Marriage on the Rocks

TOGETHER AND APART. By Margaret Kennedy. New York: Random House. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

MISS KENNEDY'S new novel has nothing of that freshness of approach, that tang of originality which made reading "The Constant Nymph" so zestful an adventure. "Together and Apart" is merely another in the studies of maladjustment in marriage which make good copy for the women's magazines and good renters for the circulating libraries—a swift-paced narrative that rarely probes deeper than the obvious emotions and that makes up in vivacity for what it lacks in depth. It is the chronicle of a union that went on the rocks largely because of the inherent cheapness of the characters of both husband and wife, and of the adjustment of their sundered lives to the new existence which the remarriage of each entailed. Woven into the tapestry of the parents' relationships is the difficult plight of their children who suffer, as sensitive natures must, under the stress of family discord.

Miss Kennedy tells her tale smoothly and rapidly, carrying the story forward now and again by means of letters, and spicing it with light conversation. Occasionally her delineation hovers on the brink of something more than the plausible, but for the most part it is facile rather than revealing. Her incident is generally commonplace and sometimes blatant, but it has the romantic appeal and her manner has the animation that will in all probability carry her book to popular favor. But it will not add to the laurels of the author of "The Constant Nymph."

A Land and a People

BY SHIRLEY BARKER

SEERS of my day, loose-lipped and self-assured,
Call me the dying bough on the dead tree;
Tell me my race is evermore immured
In sunken graveyards; blood from oversea . . .
Which you call new . . . will wake new miracle
Out of the empty soil that starved my sires
Until they died within themselves, and walked,
And breathed, and bred dead sons too long a time;
Tell me a peasant woman is a shell
Bearing the pearl of vitalness within;
That in my fields, run-out and rusty-stalked,
She shall grow sweet corn and unfailing thyme.

Tell me these things: "Here there were Puritans,
Stiff-necked and gray, blind as the steeple bat
To virtues alien in their stubborn clans;
Their laws forbade the tassel on a hat,
The buckle on a shoe, the gilded sleeve;
These bigots prayed, and bred sons who were weaker
With every breeding; these shall not retrieve
Ascendency, for a new race is forming. . . .
At carven doors hear the coarse knuckles storming . . .
A people dies! The People rise!"

Bespeak her,
This woman, who is earth, and man, and pain,
Harvest and dearth, the spirit of your People.
She toils to whitewash stones along her lane,
Missing the vision behind the whitewashed steeple.
Her hands are raw with labor in the mills;
She has delights, nor knows the lesser one
Between the moment when her body fills
With the sharp clamor of the living son,
And a new ribbon for her unwashed hair.
Pitiful is she as a new-plowed field;
As patient, and as sure to bear, and bear;
Heavy with strength she cannot learn to wield,
Half-troubled by old laughters on the air.

You give this land to her, seers of my day,
Give her the king-writ grants she cannot read,
And let us watch her. I shall stand aside,
And hear the wooden pattens pounding up
The stairs of generations. I shall laugh
At certain changing heirs of this, your People.

The posturer who clips the unwieldy name,
And calls himself "Rob Jones" or "Edward Smith." . . .
He would despise us when he took our land,
But now he wants the name that goes therewith . . .
Now he has coins to jangle in his pocket;
The dame who shapes her grandsires' tardy fame
And shows the jewel from a pawn-shop locket,
Saying her forebears brought it out of Kent,
Lincoln, or Surrey (she has studied maps)
In Cromwell's time (she has studied history
With sloe-black Slavic eyes, dull but intent).

You say the Puritans are dead? Perhaps.

This country will not let this people die;
Their dust strikes deeper than the mountain root,
Their inarticulate grief swells in its rivers,
Their tartness sets the flavors of its fruit.
While there are stars . . . by this I mean forever . . .
Who takes this land may climb
With wooden shoes or silver up the stairs
Of generations, but his look will grow,
In climbing, like the look of Alden's heirs;
Myles Standish will be in him ere he know;
When all you loose-lipped seers have talked with time,
And turned away, admitting it is so.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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At the Cannon's Mouth

IN the current *Harper's*, Mr. Dumas Malone climbs out on a long limb and names the forty most important Americans. Such lists are about as safe as fulminate caps but Mr. Malone is nonchalant about his for he has an answer to all howls: his criterion is the amount of space allotted to his forty immortals in "The Dictionary of American Biography," which he edited. He has made some adjustments, presumably because the contributors did not always observe the space limits assigned to them, but he does not go beyond the original editorial calculus. Inside that original decision, his criterion is objective and makes an interesting yardstick for reputations in our era.

Mr. Malone's list contains eight men of letters, and their names show at once how relatively unstable literary reputation is. His twenty-three names from public life are all fixtures in history; at most only two of them are open to objection, and though our successors may rearrange the order in which they are listed they are not likely to amend the list. But the critical opinion that determined the space allotted to the eight authors has already become unacceptable. Today's criticism would change both the names on the list and the order in which they are ranked. Mr. Malone lists them thus:

Emerson
Hawthorne
Mark Twain
Whitman
Poe
Thoreau
Henry James
Cooper

That is about where criticism stood when "The Cambridge History of American Literature" was written, except that Mark Twain has too high a place and Melville does not appear. Even at that time two of the judgments represented pure academic scholarship; they probably would not be accepted by such scholarship today and certainly would not be by the generality of educated opinion. Today Cooper is hardly more than a textbook figure. The Leatherstocking books continue to be classics of boyhood, his other novels and his polemical works have a small but devoted following, and European scholarship is much engaged with him—but few critics or readers would name him among the first eight. Poe is important chiefly as a vested interest of professional scholars; he has been more widely and more exhaustively studied than any other American writer. But his importance ends with scholarship. Outside the vested interest hardly anyone would put him on such a list; hardly anyone would call him, except as a historical figure, a first-rater.

Fifteen years ago Whitman might well have been first on the list, except that the "Cambridge History" was a professorial undertaking, and that he may still be ranked fourth shows how great his reputation was at its crest. The crest came in the decade following 1910; through the Muckraking era and down to midafternoon of Greenwich Village he was at least three-fourths of American literature. For a number of reasons—his untraditional verse forms, his Bohemian mannerisms, his over-celebrated sexuality, and his offensiveness to the Philistines—he became a sacred symbol of revolt at a time when literature was rebelling on all fronts. The elegist of an America that was already dead when he wrote, he was strangely accepted as the prophet of an America then supposed to be at dawning. Most of those who quoted him in that glorious dayspring invariably quoted the same passages, and stopped quoting where the anthologies stopped; it is unlikely that anyone but Christopher Morley, Carl Van Doren, Louis Untermeyer, and a few other *aficionados* had read all of his poetry or much of his prose. Mr. Malone says that his reputation is increasing but the evidence all points the other way.

Hawthorne is probably ranked too high on the list for today's opinion, and Henry James and Thoreau are certainly ranked too low. Thoreau's reputation is unique in American literary opinion, in that it has grown steadily ever since his death and continues to grow. A poll of intelligent opinion today would probably advance him to third on such a list, and it is a reasonable prophecy that he will rise still higher in the future.

The first three places are the ones most interesting to play with in this admittedly idle game of opinion. Mr. Malone is right in naming Emerson first. He has not only held that place in the past but he holds it now. Some years ago Mr. James Truslow Adams asserted that Emerson's appeal was primarily to adolescence, and that opinion is widespread, but it holds only for the literary and ethical essays, and as they decline in reputation other sides of his genius receive increased respect. The Emerson of "Nature" and "Compensation" has faded somewhat; the Emerson of the poems and the Emerson of "Experience," "The Young American," and the Journals casts a longer shadow than he ever did before. The Transcendentalist may sink still farther, but the student of behavior and the analyst of events may just be coming into his proper fame.

Emerson, Mark Twain, Thoreau; Thoreau, Emerson, Mark Twain; Mark Twain, Thoreau, Emerson—one or another of those groupings probably represents the average informed opinion of this generation. Probably more qualified critics would agree that these three are our top flight than could be brought to agree on any other three. Is there not a marked gap between this group and whichever names you care to list after them?

Agreement about the next three would be infinitely harder to secure. Probably Hawthorne would get the most votes and probably Poe would not get any. Many would place Henry James here, and some would protest his exclusion from the first three. The Melville boom, a product of his centennial and his usefulness as one more scourge for Philistine America, has apparently subsided; now that they can look at him dispassionately, most critics would probably put him in this group. Lowell does not appear on Mr. Malone's list at all, but a strong case can be made out for the first American critic of importance and the author of "The Biglow Papers." Part of Emily Dickinson's earlier reputation was due to the fact that she too could be explained as an artist whom the brutish America had somehow impaired, but she has survived the enthusiasm of the rebellious decade much better than most. Howells is also a good bet for the long pull. He is more widely read today than Cooper (probably more than Poe also), and he has a historical importance at least as great. And Mr. Brooks may succeed in rehabilitating Dr. Holmes.

So much as a guess about reputations today. A personal opinion is something else. If asked to rank in order the eight most important American men of letters, the editor would decline on the ground that such ratings are meaningless. If forced to make one, he would confess that his preference for the first three is Mark Twain, Emerson, Thoreau, and would hastily add that he doesn't expect anyone to agree with him. Still protesting, he would list the others in this order:

Hawthorne
Henry James
Melville
Whitman
Lowell

The list is for today only and has no necessary relation to opinions its compiler held last year or may hold next year. Public notice: he will not debate it on this page or by letter.

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Letters to the Editor: *Zola's "Germinal" and Hardy's "Tess"*

Contributions to "The Test of Time" are being received faster than they can be printed. As we announced when this department was originated, some of these contributions—such as the two which follow—will be used in condensed form as letters to the editor.

Germinal

SIR:—The widespread critical interest in "proletarian literature" makes appropriate a reconsideration of one of the earliest and best proletarian novels, Zola's "Germinal."

The contemporary proletarian novelist can learn much from Zola. That prolific craftsman with his painstaking documentary method was too wise to ignore the complexity of the problem. His is no naive lion and lamb theology. He has no faith in violence. Indeed its results are almost always ironical. In his novel hatred of the militia merely leads to the death of a homesick urchin from Brittany who happens to wear the detested uniform. Destruction of machinery causes lower wages; the flooding of the mine by a rabid revolutionist traps many miners; the bread riots are dispersed to permit the pastry cook to deliver a *vol au vent* to the manager. And the supreme irony—the strike bankrupts the benevolent Deneulin, permitting unscrupulous absentee landlords to control his admirably managed mine.

Above all, the novel is perfect in form. Zola is not primarily concerned with individuals. His sub-title is "Master and Man"; it is their conflict that engrosses him. Nothing is allowed to disturb this focus. Incidents are cleverly built up to the inevitable climax; the forces involved are contrasted by juxtaposing scenes in mansion and mine. Dozens of characters are distinguished deftly, and sympathy for them is evoked with amazing economy. And against the gaunt background of the mine, described not with the throbbing overtones of D. H. Lawrence, but rather in the manner of a master etcher, Zola portrays the hysterical violence of the strikers, shouting for "Bread! Bread! Bread!" just as an earlier mob had shouted in that ominous month of Germinal which preceded the Reign of Terror.

RICHARD M. KAIN.

Delaware, Ohio.

An Innocent Sinner of Old

SIR:—A full generation has passed since Hardy's "Tess of the d'Urbervilles" became a literary controversy on both the English and American side of the Atlantic. What right had Thomas Hardy to call his dairy maid—unwedded mother and ultimately murderess—a Pure Woman? So clamored the protestants. The issue would be laughed out of court today. Who pauses to challenge the spiritual virginity of Jennie Hadley or Ruth Alleyndale among the hour's favorites? It must appear that, as against this essential purity, no biological adventure is taken into account in modern reckoning.

Should debate arise over Hardy's masterpiece today, it would hinge rather on the author's right to assume that the Almighty was responsible for weaving the chain of malignant happenings by which Tess was dragged from misery to misery, and finally to the gallows. The dominant voices in this day of a transmuting ethical code would charge Society, not God, with the catastrophe.

Call it as you may, this tragic record of Wessex fates, there are readers uncounted in number, biding among the English-speaking, English-judging peoples, who would rejoice to welcome another piece of fiction as good as this novel in the fine old tradition. As good in its flexible narrative form, its structural symmetry; as strong in its austere purpose, its drama both of action and idea, its character portrayal; as fine of texture, of entire art import. Yes,—as good a story.

Sophocles might have woven the drama, —in its remorselessness, it titanic power.

LEONORA BECK ELLIS.

Tampa, Fla.

"SAY, CHIEF! HOW ABOUT A POETS' WEEK-END SPECIAL FOR SPRING?"

Hopkins Letters

SIR:—As the text of "Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins, including his Correspondence with Coventry Patmore" (Vol. III of his letters) is now nearly ready for the printer, I should be grateful if you would allow me to ask those who may have letters from Hopkins among their family papers, to make some search for them. Letters written to several of his school and college friends seem to have disappeared, but no doubt many are merely waiting to be found. There is also one letter from Hopkins to Coventry Patmore that I cannot trace and am particularly anxious to print—a long letter of 7 November 1886, written from Dublin. It is included in the "Catalogue of the Library of Coventry Patmore" issued by Everard Meynell, the Serendipity Shop, 1921, but it is absent from the Catalogue (N.D.) of Everard Meynell's collection of books and documents offered for sale after his death by Messrs. J. & E. Bumpus, though the other letters from Hopkins to Patmore are to be found there. Presumably it was sold; and neither Mr. Francis Meynell or Mr. J. G. Wilson of Messrs. Bumpus can help to trace the purchaser. If the owner could allow me to copy and print it, I should be very glad.

C. COLLEER ABBOTT.

The Castle, University College,
Durham, England.

Infliction

SIR:—It seems to me that you have the wrong caption over your correspondence page: instead of "Letters to the Editor" it ought to read "Letter to the Editor." And underneath, in smaller type, you might put "Pardon the Infliction."

HARRY TAYLOR.

Pittsfield, Mass.

Trujillo

SIR:—I am engaged in collecting material for a study (unauthorized) of the dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo y Molina, President of the Dominican Republic. Among your readers there may be some who know Trujillo through personal experience; I should be grateful for any information concerning him, and I agree, of course, to regard all material as confidential unless permission is granted to reveal its source.

WILLIAM A. KRAUSS.

406 Prospect Avenue,
Hackensack, N. J.

Holly

SIR:—Who was Epaminondas Holly? He sounds like a character in early American fiction. I shall be grateful for help.

HENRY S. CANBY.

25 W. 45 St.,
New York City.

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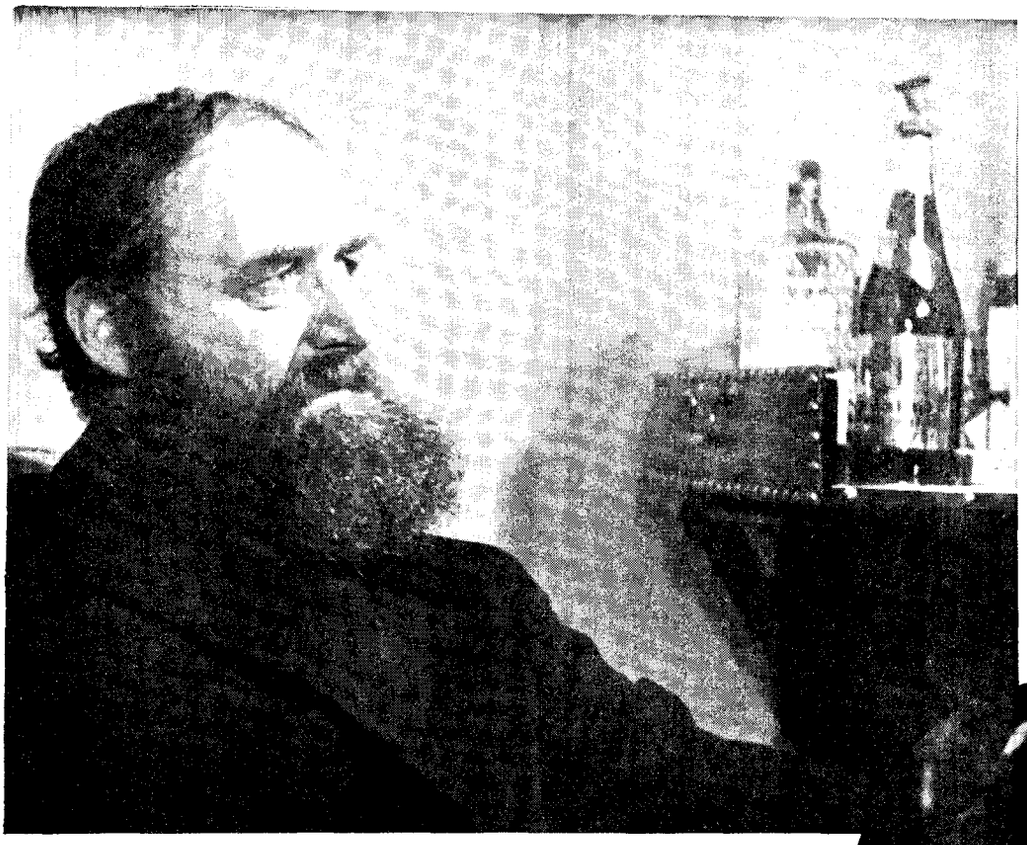
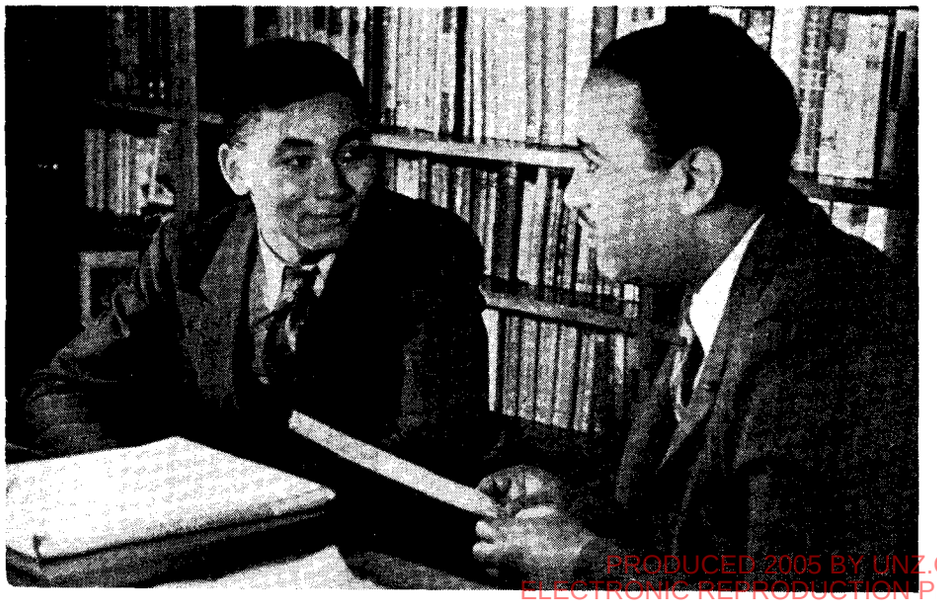


Peter Freuchen, Danish explorer and Arctic adventurer, at a party given by his publisher, Stanley Rinehart. Mr. Freuchen is writing a new book to be called "It's All Adventure"; in July he will join an expedition to the Arctic via Siberia. . . . (Below, right) Herschel Brickell, *New York Post* book critic, talks with Esther Forbes, author of the Puritan novel, "Paradise."

Bertita Harding, author of "Golden Fleece," goes for a walk in Central Park . . . (In circle) Frances Winwar, like Esther Forbes, has written a novel about the Puritans — hers is entitled "Gallows Hill."

Robert Rylee, Southern novelist, comes to New York. So does Angelo Herndon (left, below) whose autobiography, just out, is reviewed on the next page; here he talks with his attorney, Ben Davis, Jr.

Paul B. Sears, botanist, university professor, erosion expert, and author of "Deserts on the March," is guest of honor at a party given by University Books, Inc. Mr. Sears is talking to . .



Richard Halliburton (left, above) discusses his next book, a juvenile, with Bobbs-Merrill editor Hewitt H. Howland

(Saturday Review News Pictures of the Month by Disraeli

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Baroness Shidzue Ishimoto, sociologist and advocate of the birth control movement in Japan, has written two books about her own life, "Facing Two Ways" and "East Way, West Way." She is now at work on a book about Japanese women and customs.

. . . Carl Carmer, who wrote "Listen for a Lonesome Drum." (Below) Edwin Lanham visits Schulte's Bookstore. His "Banners at Daybreak" is reviewed on page 41.

The Making of a Radical

LET ME LIVE. The Autobiography of Angelo Herndon. New York: Random House. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE H. DESSION

THIS is the autobiography of a twenty-three-year-old Negro who stands convicted by a Georgia court under a savage and archaic slave insurrection law enacted in 1861, and who has been sentenced to from eighteen to twenty years on the chain gang. His "crime" consisted in encouraging white and black workers in the South to organize into unions and demand better wages and working conditions, in promoting Unemployment Council meetings to protest the inadequacy of relief for the starving in Atlanta and discrimination by relief agencies against Negroes, and in the dissemination of communist literature. His story, simply and graphically told, is that of a boy who left Ohio at the age of thirteen to find work to support his widowed mother, and of his subsequent experiences with race conflict in the South and with employer-labor relations in the coal-mining regions of Ohio, Kentucky, Alabama, and Georgia.

The result is a significant case study in the evolution of political radicalism in the American climate. Some may question whether the incidents reported have not been selected and distorted to fit the thesis. But the narrative is free from any inherent improbability. As a small boy Herndon first became aware of race discrimination when some white boys called him "nigger" and threw stones at him. He saw his father, a hard-working and pious coal-miner who acquiesced humbly in his lot, die in poverty and at an early age from overwork and "miner's pneumonia." Working in the coal mines of Kentucky and Alabama he encountered ten to fourteen-hour days of backbreaking work underground, cheating at the hands of company checkers, fraudulent deductions from his pay for imaginary expenses and services, and exorbitant prices at the company stores for inferior goods which he was compelled to buy. Throughout the South he saw Negroes deprived of rights supposed to be incident to citizenship and subjected to brutal and vicious maltreatment.

It is not surprising that such experiences should have led Herndon into the activities which brought about his indictment and conviction in Georgia. He came to question the passive non-resistant attitude of his parents and of the great majority of his kind. On several occasions, seeing considerable numbers of Negroes bullied by a single white man, it occurred to him that in organization lies strength. When he was seventeen he saw a handbill, which read: "Would you rather fight or starve?" It summoned all Birmingham workers to attend a meeting under the auspices of the Unemployment Council. This was his first communist meeting. Troubled all his life by racial inequality and discrimination, he now found blacks and whites meeting on a plane of equality for the first time. Here was organization. And last but not least, here was education. His father had sacrificed to give him some education as a child. On his deathbed the father had urged him to seek more. But since going to work in the mines at thirteen the boy had had little opportunity. Now, as he expresses it: "Every meeting of the Unemployment Council became a classroom for me. I never left one of them without bearing away with me the discovery of a new idea." And chief amongst these new ideas was a conviction that the struggle was not between whites and blacks, but rather between workers, both black and white, and their exploiters. Herndon went to work thereafter as an organizer.

His account of how from that time on he was continually arrested, brutally handled, held incommunicado for days, and on several occasions narrowly escaped being lynched, will surprise no one familiar with the history of labor movements in this country. The picture presented is graphic and swiftly moving. It comprehends a great deal more than any local problem of race inequality with its attendant brutalizing of the lower stratum by that which happens to be in control. And as it transcends the race problem of the South so it transcends state and even sectional lines. For telling evidence is presented of the systematic stirring up of local prejudice and lynch spirit by industrial interests decidedly non-resident in character, speaking through a subsidized press, in order to prevent cheap labor, whether white or black, from organizing to better its condition. Herndon sought to organize white and black labor alike, and in the process he advocated communist principles. For this he was convicted.

His fate is now in the hands of the United States Supreme Court, for the second time. In 1935 it dismissed his appeal from the conviction on a technical point of pleading, Justices Cardozo, Brandeis, and Stone dissenting. His appeal from the Supreme Court of Georgia's denial of a writ of habeas corpus, whereby he seeks to attack the constitutionality of the statute under which he was convicted, is now pending. This time a decision on the merits is to be hoped for; and how much more than the fate of Angelo Herndon may be included in those merits is a question on which the book is extremely suggestive.

George H. Dession is on the faculty of the Yale School of Law. A picture of Angelo Herndon appears in the lower left-hand corner of the opposite page.

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Intimate Explorations

FOUNTAINS OF YOUTH. By Dormer Creston. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

THE most brilliant of contemporary dramatists, embarrassed by a naive compliment on the most human and least tendentious of his plays, replied to his tormentor: "Nonsense! You could have written it yourself, if you had had the sense to go to the sources." What was true of Joan of Arc is true of Marie Bashkirtseff. Provided that one dips sufficiently in the fountain of the diaries, it is impossible to compile a dull book about her. Miss Creston's work proves this.

Miss Creston has a good many qualifications. She is sympathetic and penetrating. Her comments which are based on her own observations of men and things are frequently interesting. But it must be confessed that she has a capacity amounting to talent for writing the worst English that ever crossed the Atlantic in either direction. It is too bad because a book otherwise not without brilliance and charm has been definitely hurt by carelessness.

If the subject of this biography were alive, she would be seventy-seven years old. In point of fact she died fifty-three years ago, and she has been famous for forty-eight years—ever since William Ewart Gladstone trumpeted his discovery in the sober pages of *The Nineteenth Century*. But Marie Bashkirtseff's book needed no politician's puff direct or collusive. Pepys and Boswell are met front to front on their own ground by a girl who began her diary at twelve and who died at twenty-four. These two extraordinary men, her rivals in the exploration of intimacies, had this in common that they knew men and cities and each in his way was connected on the whole satisfactorily with the great world without. But the little Russian girl who seventy years later wandered into her own inner terra incognita had so to say fled into the wilderness, from a bad environment.

Miss Creston dwells properly on a point which should be emphasized. I don't see how any one could have enjoyed belonging to the Bashkirtseff family. Superficially they appeared fortunate and not without distinction. They were well-born and wealthy. Marie's father was Marshal of the nobility of Poltava. But they were like so many other noble families. They were gauche and raffish and irresponsible. But they had one outstanding virtue, warm, blind tribal affection which condoned every error and transcended bickering.

Into this promising group, with its philosophy of the Casino and the Kurhaus, was thrust the child Marie, a person boundlessly egoistic and with the sort of intellect and resolution that makes greatness. Her feelings were powerful and undisciplined and she had a dogmatic contempt for the frivolous and the unimportant. From the moment she could talk she dominated the slack, wavering family, not that she modified their ineffectiveness, but she got what she wanted. Whatever happened she would not be like them. She was determined to make a mark in the world as a woman and as an artist. She would be charming; she would be famous. She would be a singer, failing that a painter, and failing that she would leave a book behind her that men would not willingly let die. Fame! Fame! Boswell was never

Walery, Paris

MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF

thirstier. A great Passion. A great hit! She's for the Moors and Martyrdom.

Her first footsteps in pursuit of those particular Moors are incredibly ludicrous and incredibly pathetic. The Duke of Hamilton, justly unconscious of his immortality, was the earliest object of her passion, her age being twelve. She could not hear him spoken of without changing color. The passion of a richly endowed woman raged in the breast of a child. Her time must come. When the Opera in Paris is ringing with her triumph he will be drawn to her by the irresistible magnetism of fame. And yet much to the gratification of Miss Creston and mankind the strange, passionate, dispassionate creature has this to say of her Ouidaesque Adonis: "He is the kind of man who likes good wine and bad women." Nevertheless the sky cracked when he married.

Lovers more tangible, for she never once spoke to the Duke, succeeded him. Antonelli, Lardarel, a dark galaxy of Russians—all these came, saw, vanished, leaving the most curious spiritual wrack and a full record of their imbecility.

At sixteen she might, as she said, have been a countess two and a half times (the half, she added, was for Antonelli) and then destiny shot the first arrow. Her voice, the voice that was to have conquered the resplendent and grossly unimportant duke, was permanently injured by a throat-disease, the forerunner of worse things to come. Undismayed she entered Julien's atelier for women. A year later she considered herself a serious painter and was so considered by her betters. The candle was burning at both ends for at the same time she was conducting wild raids into such society as she dared invade in fruitless pursuit of Paul de Cassagnac. And then light broke for a moment over the then raffish Russian family. For a lucid interval they were almost chic, invited into the very Faubourg. Solider recognition came when a pastel head by Marie was hung on the line at the Salon. But her ambitious street scene, so good that Bastien-Lepage was supposed by the spiteful to have helped her, was skied.

Bastien-Lepage had indeed come into the picture, a magnificent creature who had native peasant virtue and a gentleness that noble blood alone never gave. Marie the complex, the self-centred, the absurd, the pathetic, was startled into naturalness by simplicity and integrity. For the first time like many another she saw the self that had been the sole and daily object of her contemplation. Turning aside from Stendhal's "De l'Amour," she wrote in the diary: "Either I have never been in love, or I have never ceased to be in love with an imaginary being." When was it better said?

But with respect to the relation between an extraordinary girl and an extraordinary man destiny was quite uncharacteristically clear. To the marriage of true minds the ultimate impediment was admitted. Bastien-Lepage went to Algiers suffering from strain, overwork, what you will. When he returned with his doom written on his countenance, it was merely a question which of the two would die first. Things settled down to a grim sort of race. Marie won by six weeks —a respectable triumph. And every phase of the struggle is as clear as if you saw it take place under your own roof.

One cannot pretend to describe her or even to touch a facet of her strange crystal. You may be enraged by her egotism. You will certainly be overwhelmed by her mere drive and power. But on one point I think you will be clear.

Mr. H. W. Garrod in his amusing "Depreciation of Jane Austen" wonders whether the adjective "great" may properly be applied to a woman. But at the summit and crest of his not too elegant irony his heart misgave him about Emily Brontë. Without instituting inappropriate comparison, I may point out that even an English critic might have done himself the honor of remembering a Russian girl who wrote a diary.

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A Popular Front against Unreason

FORCE OR REASON. By Hans Kohn. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by CARLTON J. H. HAYES

PROFESSOR KOHN is not only a distinguished historian and a specialist on modern nationalism, but also what may be described as an incorrigible liberal. He here writes briefly and brilliantly of his hopes and fears. He is no disciple of Spengler, no defeatist. He begins by combatting the notion that democracy is on the wane (it is stronger than ever, he insists); and he concludes by reaffirming his faith in the eventual universal triumph of those principles of individualism, democracy, liberty, and reason which took root in Europe and America in the eighteenth century and which in the last century nourished popular aspirations over a wide area.

Professor Kohn recognizes that the continuing progress of liberalism and enlightenment is imperilled by three novel developments, and to these he devotes as many chapters. One is "the cult of force," a spreading admiration for the strong man and the strong nation, a devout mood which was foreshadowed by the career of Napoleon, exalted by the achievements of Bismarck, supported by the pseudo-Darwinian doctrine of "the struggle for existence" and by the Nietzschean "will-to-power," and, finally, rendered fashionable by the World War. A second and parallel development has been "the dethronement of reason," a repudiation of that fruitful faith in the natural reasonableness of all men which posited their essential equality and common interests, and a counter-acceptance of romanticism, pessimism, and racialism, which have combined to exaggerate the differences between men and between races and to perpetuate "the past without any hope for a better future."

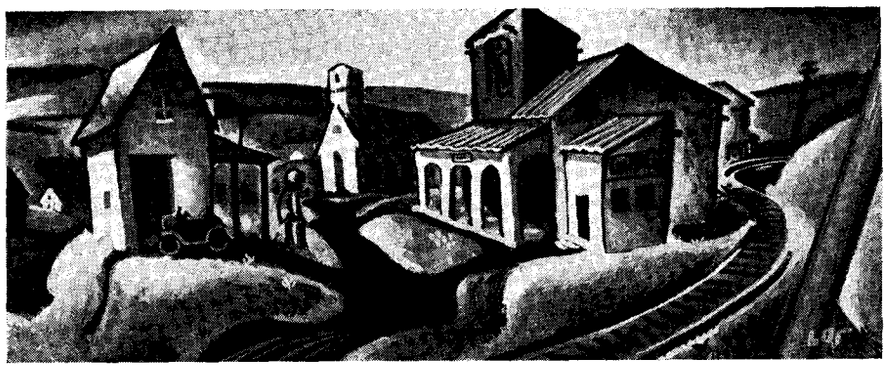
The third development is "the crisis of imperialism," the difficulty of reconciling further expansionist ambitions of European powers with the recently acquired determination of native peoples all over the world to secure for themselves the spiritual freedom and material benefits which were formerly confined to Europeans and Americans. This last development, however, though a present difficulty, points in Professor Kohn's mind to the way out. It will *oblige* the masses of mankind to reënthrone reason, to banish the cult of force, and to resume the triumphal march of enlightenment and liberty.

There is allure in Professor Kohn's theses. He says suavely and with conviction just what millions in the United States, Britain, and France want to hear but had almost despaired of hearing. He reassures all liberals, and marshals them, along with socialists and communists, in a world-wide Popular Front against fascism, war, and unreason. There is almost certain to be a chorus of acclaim.

In such a chorus the present reviewer would join—with some reservations. After all, if one were inclined to pessimism rather than to optimism, one might guess that the complete Europeanization of the world would serve not to contract but to expand the field of operation for the evils of force and irrationalism. If these evils flourish in Europe, the original seat of enlightenment, why should they not accompany its export to less favored regions? Perhaps, also, Professor Kohn is too disposed to regard force and irrationalism as merely temporary aberrations and quite separable from Europe's "enlightened progress" of the past two or three hundred years. He admits that, "as it took a long time to draw the ultimate conclusions from the dechristianization of western humanity, so it took a long time to feel the consequences of the dehumanization of western mankind." But if he had paused to dwell on these phenomena, he might have established a distressingly close connection between the historic "enlightenment" he thoroughly admires, and present ills which he properly abominates.

One might likewise question the tenderness of a confirmed liberal toward Marxian communism. Surely, the cult of force, if not the dethronement of reason, has been popularized less by the biology of Darwin and the philosophy of Nietzsche than by Marx's dogma of class conflict. Mussolini, we may recall, was once a left-wing Marxian; and Russian communists now employ fascist methods in "liquidating" heretics. Finally, in still another sphere, some pessimist might make the annoying suggestion that the heroic and highly enlightened efforts of the last hundred years to enable everyone to read and write have now eventuated not only in universal literacy but also in unprecedented gullibility. And though Professor Kohn refuses to be a defeatist about the wane of democracy, he makes no prediction about the future of individual liberty.

Carlton J. H. Hayes is Seth Low Professor of History in Columbia University.



FROM THE JACKET DESIGN OF "A LAMP ON THE PLAINS"

Color of New Mexico

A LAMP ON THE PLAINS. By Paul Horgan. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by EDITH MIRRIELEES

THE scene of this book is laid in New Mexico. It is territory which Paul Horgan knows by heart and which is probably the most fascinating outland now left in the United States. As a result of these two conditions, this latest of his novels, interesting from several standpoints, is most of all interesting for its superb local color.

Much of the action of the book takes place in the year 1918, but "A Lamp on the Plains" is not therefore a war story. In fact, it is a sequel—though it can be read independently—to "Main Line West," which told the story of Danny Milford through the war years. The story opens with Danny sliding from his boxcar shelter, a frightened youngster of fourteen, on the outskirts of the little town of Vrain, in New Mexico. He himself makes less impression on the reader than any one of his successive rescuers, for, after the unfortunate custom of heroes, he remains throughout a little shadowy, a little conventional in drawing. The town, on the other hand, is vigorously and continuously alive. Those of its residents who concern themselves with the vagrant—auto mechanic, gas station attendant, sheriff, minister, waitresses at the railway restaurant—any one of these is immediately convincing. Most convincing of all, and most influential on Danny's life, is Professor W. Winston Burlington, book lover, orator, and panhandler, who drops in upon Vrain and temporarily conquers it.

To concentrate attention, however, on either Danny or the Professor is to neglect the force greater than both which dominates the book. This is New Mexico. The unpeopled reaches of sand, the dust, the luminous sky, the arroyos, the sudden clayey torrents storming down them—these, in Paul Horgan's hands, are not only features of landscape and performances of weather, they are also tools for the shaping of souls. In his portrayal of the Southwest at work upon its residents the author is at his best.

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Werfeldämmerung

TWILIGHT OF A WORLD. By Franz Werfel. Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. New York: The Viking Press. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by ISAAC GOLDBERG

EIGHT stories, some of them long enough to qualify as short novels, make up this interesting collection. They are preceded by "An Essay upon the Meaning of Imperial Austria," in which the author seeks to provide a background that shall unify the tales and suggest a basis of interpretation. In addition, each tale carries its own preface; the author, it would seem, was doubly under some compulsion of exegesis.

Franz Werfel, indeed, is one of the most restless spirits of our age. Like so many of his literary generation—one has but to think back some fifteen years, when the expressionist school was at its height—he has been ridden by a sense of universal guilt in which oppressor and victim become so confused as even to change places. The full title of the last and most effective of the tales in this book is "Not the Murderer but the Murdered Is the Guilty One." It is almost a motto. It represents just such a symbolic conflict between father and son as Walter Hasenclever portrayed in his drama, "Der Sohn"—just such a questioning of the sources of guilt as was to be found in the plays of Georg Kaiser and more than one of his confrères.

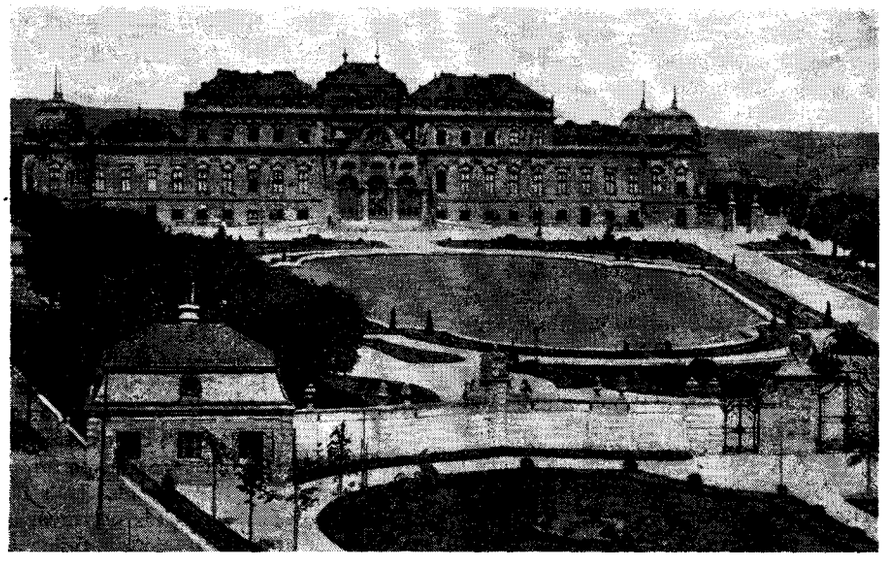
Werfel is haunted by the ghost of Freudian Œdipus. He is himself the Spiegelmensch, the Mirror-Man, of his early play bearing that title. "The Art of Life," declaims the terrorist Beschitzer in "Not the Murderer," "for the true genius, is the greatest power to doubt combined with the greatest power to dream. The power to cherish a great illusion witnesses a large heart, the capacity to doubt is proof of a strong head." Werfel has the power to doubt and the power to dream; he has cherished illusions; he has, indeed, seemed to seek them as part of a life-program. He has been not only Mirror-Man but also the mirror of man, thus making of a passive receptivity a dynamic, all-embracing humanitarianism.

If one uses such language as this in discussing Werfel it is because Werfel himself gives the cue. His opening essay is a compound of nostalgia, sentimentalism, and spiritual democracy garbed in the raiment of monarchy; it is, in itself, well worth reading, but I do not see that it throws much light upon the stories. The spectre of Franz Joseph may have presided over Werfel's imagination, but the tales themselves transcend their historical origins. This twilight is not the twilight of the Austrian world; it is not the twilight of the European world; it is the dusk in which Werfel himself has dwelt from the beginning—what might be called a *Werfeldämmerung*.

"Does man's securest possession," he asks at the end of his Essay, "abide in that which he no longer has?" The question may suggest the renunciatory core of his mysticism; an excellent pun for this sort of thing was invented in the expressionist era: *Nirvanitas nirvanitatum*. It well applies to Werfel who, as mirror-man, has known allegiance to Buddha, to Rome, to Moses.

The people of these tales are rarely what we call normal. Seeking to cheat death they cheat life; seeking to impose blame they discover their own guilt; they sow vice and reap virtue; they find death in life and life in death. They are, in a word, human paradoxes, lost—and found—in Werfel's own twilight. They have been touched by madness. Yet in them, uneasily, we recognize a certain kinship to our unacknowledged selves.

Werfel's success in the tales is uneven; his pseudo-profundities become irritating. Yet in this twilight much is to be seen that eludes the glare of merely skillful writing.



BELVEDERE CASTLE—*Palace of the Archduke Ferdinand at Vienna.*

Ford Madox Ford's Writing Friends

PORTRAITS FROM LIFE. By Ford Madox Ford. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

THE writer of literary reminiscence inhabits a delightful domain lying between criticism and biography. He has visas for both adjacent realms but takes out final papers in neither. Exempt, therefore, from serious obligations, he lives on the fat of both lands and pays his way (if at all) by his gift for table talk. Among this privileged class of writers one of the most welcome is Ford Madox Ford. His newest book, "Portraits From Life," carries the subtitle "memories and criticisms." The memories tend to overrun the criticisms. Although Mr. Ford says that he has a "passion for not knowing anything about the private lives of [his] friends—particularly if they are writers," it is obvious that his passion has been a hopeless one. No writer who shrinks from intimacies need devote a whole page to Turgeniev's use of smelling salts and two pages to Henry James's servant problems. Yet it often happens, as in the vivid instance of D. H. Lawrence's first visit to Mr. Ford, that personal data lead naturally into literary criticism.

Most of the articles of Mr. Ford's critical faith are implicit in the austere creed of the late-nineteenth-century Impressionists (among them Hueffer), who believed that it was the function of the novelist to provide the reader with "vicarious experience." Shunning the slothful technique of the Victorians, the artist must search unremittingly for the precise word, practise the most rigorous "self-effacement," and eschew all program of morality or reform. Mr. Ford's laurels naturally go to those writers, impressionists and their kin, who have kept the faith: James, Crane, Hudson, Conrad, Turgeniev, and Lawrence. None of the writers portrayed is summarily condemned except Swinburne, but some exhibit serious defects. Hardy's technique as a novelist is generally so bad that Mr. Ford prefers to cite him as a poet. Galsworthy is represented as a writer of original integrity who was seduced by a desire to reform society.

Thus Mr. Ford. He shuttles amiably back and forth between memories and criticisms, discoursing the while in language that is a skillful blend of yesterday's florid prose and the colloquial idiom of today. Some readers may be irritated by his persistently patronizing treatment of Conrad. Others may murmur, half-amused, at his proneness to underline his own role in the discovery of genius. All must agree that here is a very readable volume that will add to the appreciation of a distinguished gallery of writers.

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EDEN in Easy Payments

BY LOVELL THOMPSON

THE SEARS ROEBUCK CATALOGUE: SPRING AND SUMMER 1937. Chicago: Sears Roebuck & Company. 1937.

"AMERICA LOOKS FORWARD WITH EVERY CONFIDENCE"
From the cover design of the new Sears Roebuck catalogue.

"THINGS really are better." That is how it begins. "This new catalogue is valuable . . . to those who use it as an index of what good merchandise should cost, even though they may never purchase from us. . . . We conceive of this company . . . as a great public institution. . . ."

But the Sears, Roebuck catalogue has another and not less important role; it is a guide to rural America. Here within its thousand-odd pages is the unrefined ore of much of current regionalism. Here is what Faulkner hopes to startle, and what Lewis once tried to awaken. The sophisticated seaboard laughs at it as a land of butter and eggs, but secretly envies its peaches and cream, its certainties, as of Eden before the fall.

Accordingly, out of this 1937 catalogue, you can buy everything you need for living in the garden of Eden—and nothing else. You can get shotguns and .22 rifles, but not a revolver. You can have whisk-brooms and whistling tea-kettles, but not whisky. You can have cocktail glasses, but not a shaker. There is no Last Supper in Sears': but "Last Lunch" makes rats die beyond Eden's gates. You can't grow old, because a transformation made of grey hair costs more than one made of black or brown hair. You can have a book on The Rhythm, maternity gowns, life insurance, but not a coffin. Sears says "America doesn't need any rear-view mirror—our eyes are on the road ahead. America looks forward with every confidence."

Sears' Eden is well fenced. There are seven pages of fences, so it follows that there need only be three pages of firearms and one of dogs' accoutrements. Within the sturdy fences that keep out rats and foxes, there is leisure and merry-making. There are ten pages of musical instruments, particularly accordions and harmonicas, and ten more of radios, plus an inside back cover. Edeners buy kodaks, and their snapshots show them standing beside waterfalls and trout streams. There are camping outfits, fishing rods, canoes, tennis rackets, and baseball outfits, croquet sets, and rubber-tired lawn mowers, and American flags. But not much golf equipment. Eden is not troubled by riches.

Cheerful, energetic, thrifty and young, are the people who are silhouetted in the Sears catalogue, whose lives are implied by the things they buy. The photographs of models and the drawings are unanimous about this. The race is tall and cleanly built, but not lanky, and most are dolichocephalic. The man who tells you that "things are really better" looks a little like General Johnson, and, except for a "gracious lady" in an Irish lace collar and a hat with cornflowers, almost everybody else in Eden is young enough to be his son or daughter.

These young people are frilled and flounced and, in spite of boasts to the contrary, not much influenced by the most modern styles. Sears still offers them dust caps and night shirts. They are gadget mad, however. Their foundation garments have zipper seats, and they buy dresses with a built-in pocketbook called "Miss Miser" though they look more like "Mrs. Kangaroo." The women are more apt to grow fat than thin, for there are a score of pages of brassieres—(for what Sears calls their busts)—and scarcely disguised stays. Each Eve seems poured into her mould of comely uniformity—a mould a little too standardized, if Sears has his way, to be seductive.

The Adams are well shaved and are well lathered with brushes of genuine badger hair, one-half selected silver tip, and one-half "regular good quality badger." *Campus* is a word of praise, an unattainable standard, as are London and Paris for Sixth Avenue. They wear initials on their trousers, because "College men who like . . . originality and pep in their clothes have helped to make these snappy slacks a favorite on campuses all over the country. Priced to fit into a young man's budget without crowding. Two nickel-plated rust-proof initials included."

Birth control is as advanced as backward laws will permit; Sears stands four-square behind healthy sex, and offers Marie Stopes and various jellies, though with these of course there are no guarantees. Thus Sears' Eden achieves civilization without sophistication.

The grimness of RFD America does not show much in this cheerful '37 catalogue, but enough has slipped in to show that Uncle Sam is still a shrewd pessimist. The photograph of Mrs. Fred Sparrow who writes "I've used your blue-flame brooder for eight years" accompanies her signed statement. She is firm of mouth, a long-faced, long-headed Yankee, and not one of those round-limbed products of Sears' taxidermy. And Eden must be on its guard against Sam Slick: Sears pictures an egg basket full of eggs, but explains that the eggs are not included in the modest price. But not even Sam Slick needs to be told that you don't get the girls inside the bathing-suits.

Besides the raw material for novels, Sears offers free to American writers, "even though they may never purchase from us," a model of style. Sears is conscientious, frank, direct; it is hard to doubt the truth of what is said. When the right word is found, it is used wherever needed; there is no coyness about repetition. Good concrete words, lost to the working vocabulary of most men, give hard, well-trained precision. You can get Nation-alls of herring-bone "twill" and boat sail "drill." Sears knows the precise word when you don't. That is why you believe him. Dictionaries have two-tone "head-bands." Lipsticks are indelible

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G. W. CUNNINGHAM

General Advertising manager; in charge of the Sears Roebuck catalogue.

(Sears doesn't frown on necking) but—and this is a great deal more important to Sears—they have "swivel-cases." The china of toilet seats is "fired at a volcanic temperature."

In Eden, there is not much time for reading; whether because the Edeners are too tired or too sociable is not clear. But the reading list, which is only three pages long, begins with 1937 best sellers: "Gone with the Wind," "Anthony Adverse," "Man the Unknown," "Around the World in Eleven Years," "Edgar Guest Special," "American Psychology," and "White Banners." Children read "Black Beauty" and also "Moby Dick." Zane Grey, Grace Hill, and Gene Stratton-Porter are present as reprints. This much is in the small top half of a page; another page gives the truer picture: Handbooks on etiquette, manners, dancing, tap dancing, jokes, party games, recitations, public speaking and letter writing, plus the new Hoyle, Bibles, Thesauruses, synonym dictionaries. There is "The Modern Home Physician," "Sane Sex Life," "Dr. Dafoe's Handbook for Mothers," and "The Lazy Colon"—books of action, not books of escape.

Health and happiness not without information but without thought—this is Eden. Yet the art of the moment in America owes much to the spirit of Sears' Eden. It owes Honk the Moose and American Gothic. It owes not only such cautious prophets as Phil Stong and Grant Wood and John Curry, but such incautious rebels against Eden as Vardis Fisher. For a man cannot be a rebel except at home. New York is the serpent in Sears' garden; and when Eden is wiser—and it will be wiser—it is going to be a lot sadder. Let us, then, with Mrs. Fred Sparrow, send in our down-payment and let someone else do the brooding; the easy payment will be upon us soon enough.

Lovell Thompson is on the staff of Houghton Mifflin Co.

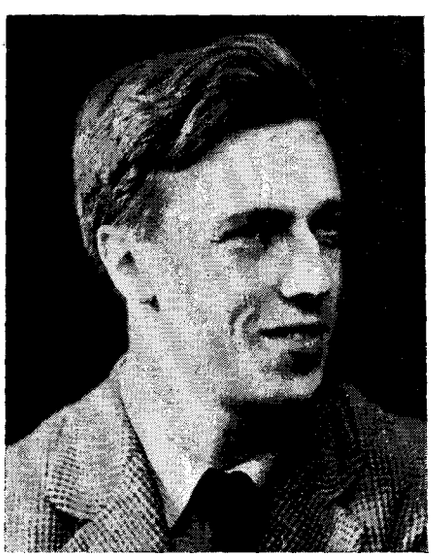
Young Poet's Novel

THE FRIENDLY TREE. By Cecil Day Lewis. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

OF the young English triumvirate of poets, Mr. C. Day Lewis is accounted the least, though he is spokesman for their theories. W. H. Auden is acclaimed for his peculiar and uneven dramas as well as for his poems *en masse*, and Stephen Spender is cheered on for brilliant (if effete) short stories as well as for the purely lyrical strain. Meanwhile, Mr. Lewis has gone ahead writing in his own way; and in the opinion of this reviewer he is developing just as rapidly as Auden or Spender. He never writes nearly as badly as Auden sometimes does. He seems to have more wisdom than Spender. He hasn't the fireworks of either of the others, but he can do a good job of writing. I think he has done one in this novel, for the most part.

Four young people are concerned in it: Anna and Stephen, Evelyn and Richard. The awakening of Anna is described with a quite remarkably subtle understanding of the emotions of a young girl. The other characters are real, as is Anna's father and the more stuffy members of the English rural school community. I should have left the book without the epilogue, the third part, called "Steve." For the major part of the book is Anna's story. One likes Steve, one does not find him overpoweringly wonderful, but one understands why Anna loved him. He is an entirely modern young man, a questioner of all established things, but honest and with charm. He and Anna are thwarted by the fact that he can't get a job as yet—and some of their young and modern talk is naturally enough about their being victims of the economic system. But whether he knows it or not, what young Mr. Lewis has done for 244 pages of this book is to give the modern prototype of the growth of young love as it was well seen of George Meredith in his own day.



CECIL DAY LEWIS

I don't object to the epilogue because of disagreeable features. I do not need "happy endings." But what I do object to is an author suddenly stirring up new complications, because he probably thought he had been getting too sappy—complications so very faintly foreshadowed in the main story that they aren't quite credible. And I object to the priggish self-righteousness of turning Evelyn and Richard Crane into barren symbols. It makes me like and sympathize with the Cranes a lot and feel that they have been shabbily treated.

Yet the epilogue shows that when Mr. Lewis learns a little more about organizing a complicated novel he will do most interesting work. As it is he has written a fine and sensitive love story.

Citizen of the Sea

CRUISE OF THE CONRAD. By Alan Villiers. Illustrated. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1937. $3.75.

Reviewed by HASSOLDT DAVIS

ALAN VILLIERS is as much, and as little, a "citizen of the sea" as Conrad or Masefield or Tomlinson; his heart is in oceans, right enough, but it must forever return to the landsman's ink where adventures can be refined and valued.

Villiers sailed 57,000 miles around the world in a square rigger, the last existing frigate, his own ship, with a crew of lads averaging twenty years of age. There was no particular point to the voyage and no profit other than the adventures of hardship and beauty among far lands. They visited what is left of Bali, and sailed to the savage islands in and neighboring the Sulu Sea. They carried gold prospectors to Samarai, met many isolated traders who were missionaries in the finest sense, and missionaries who were traders. (The number of the heathen was growing in the Solomons!) They fought south through treacherous reefs and weather to Sydney, north of Tahiti, then around the Horn on the journey home.

This makes exhilarating reading for the greater part, but there are doldrums in it. It is the story of a ship apostrophized, and one wishes that there were more men and less canvas mentioned, that less of it seemed a transcription from the log. But Alan Villiers writes splendidly always, and most modestly for one who had the courage to take an ancient frigate manned by schoolboys around the world. Such a ship will never sail again, and to lovers of the sea this book will be welcome. It is illustrated with sixty of the author's magnificent photographs, probably the best ship- and seascapes being made today.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Sonnet in a Knothole

WE idled at our doings, heart and I.
We watched the puddle lose its glaze of frost,
Measured the April in a pale March sky
And saw the birch-tree root all newly mossed.
Filling our fingernails with spring, we raked
And burned and swept, and breathed, and chopped some wood;
And even in that easiness, heart ached
To keep this noon forever, if we could.

But no one guessed (we made no outward stopping)
The sudden woodsman stroke that we incurred
When down through fibre, grain, and knotted wit
The oak of language shivered, cleanly split
By the flashed axe-blade of the perfect word.
We tightened steel to helve, and went on chopping.

Small Wares

(And an Iron Residue)

I've been looking at some photographs (in that always exciting quarterly *The Colophon*) of the sanctums of eminent book collectors. And I'm amused again at their museum look, their housemaid neatness. Damn it, those fellows aren't collectors, they're interior decorators. Clean-swept desks, deep rugs, a few choice bric-a-bracs each in the exact spot . . . one even has some empty space on his shelves. (Incredible!) What do they do with all the precious and heavenly oddities, minutiæ, small wares (excellent department-store term) that flock around the humbler collector? And each of these as delightful in its way as a perfect First. Is it possible that these lads only cherish the things that have been collated, certified, appraised, by some one else? What do they do with association treasures of *their own*?

Damn it all, I've been wanting for a long time to say something about this room (whose picture will not get into print). I dare say you'd think it ugly, but dogs and cats love it (every new animal makes straight for it; Blythe says it's the "masculine smell") and as for the rats: you should hear them antic-hay in the wall behind the shelves. I thought when I built the Knothole that this older room would settle down into austere decorum; but the habits of years are too strong for it.

A genuine collector *never* has any space, no matter how he contrive.

But I really want to know: I appeal for information: what do these well-bred æsthetes do with all the adorable trivia of life that are so dear to numbskulls like me? I'll take one shelf at random: here is a précis of o's d'a that have collected along it, in front of the books.

(1.) A complicated little gadget, in a leather folder, for reaming, coring and probing a pipe. I never use things of that sort, they make life more difficult still, but this was given me by that polished man-about-books Mr. Eddie Ziegler and I cherish it as a symbol of his goodness.

(2.) A horse's head, carved in Ivory soap by a daughter.

(3.) The last of half a dozen silver teaspoons which (with a corkscrew) were the first things I bought at Oxford, at the beginning of Michaelmas term 1910. If you were here and we were talking things over, that would send me down the shelf to R. W. Chapman's *The Portrait of a Scholar* (Oxford Press, 1920) in which there is a delicious essay on Silver Spoons.

Good idea, I'll move the spoon to another shelf, where it can stay right in front of Chapman's book.

(4.) A terra-cotta egg-cup, with Indian designs, from Valparaiso. Too precious to eat eggs from (this household has had bad luck with many favorite egg-cups), it is useful to hold paper-clips. —Among the few things I've ever thought seriously of collecting are egg-cups. I've had them of china, and wood, and even pewter, but they always disappear. What became of that little beauty from Mt. Saint Michel, with a picture of the abbey? Then the family brought me a charming one from a convent in Quebec, with a pewter ornament, which washed off. But when I am very old, and life settles down, I shall go in for egg-cups, range them delicately in a cabinet, and have them photographed for *The Colophon*.

"DAS FREMDE KRAUT NICOTIANA"
SEBIZIUS: STRASSBURG, 1579

(5.) Tait McKenzie's fine medallion of Walt Whitman, done for the Franklin Inn Club (of Philly) at Walt's centennial in 1919.—This fronts a thick rich collection of miscellaneous postal cards, which deserve the bibliographic study for which literature is too brief. I shuffle through them and put foremost the picture of one of America's most beautiful fireplaces, which is at "Charlesgift," Maryland, the seat of Hulbert Footner, Esq., and birthplace of Mme. Storey, my favorite female detective.—As it is late, and dusting this shelf has made me thirsty, I shall do the unusual: open the new bottle of Cutty Sark and drink a solitary toast to Mme. Storey, whose new book is about to appear. Is it possible to fall in love with a person merely imagined by a friend? How well Mme. Storey and I would have understood each other. And how grimly curious I am about the (perhaps mythical?) M. Storey, who is never mentioned or explained.

(May I remark what a handsome gloss and color these plain cypress shelves have taken in seventeen years; like old violins. It was a bright spring day of 1920 when I first took possession of this room. As a matter of fact an even earlier occupant was L., then small wares of sixteen months, who spent her first night in this house in a baby carriage right where these shelves now stand. The furniture van broke down on the way from Philadelphia, so that night we slept as best we could. I lay on the dining room floor with the light burning (so the van would find the house if it arrived in middle darkness) and read Conrad's *The Rescue*, then about to be published. I still remember how pleased I was by one line—*There is no rest for a messenger till the message is delivered.*

(6.) Beyond the postcards is something whose purpose you'd scarcely guess. It's an egg-cosy; but a modernistic egg-cosy (looks like a conical carnival-hat) which I regard as symbolic of much. To change the Supreme Court is trivial compared to altering the traditional idea of a Suffolk egg-cosy.

(7.) Tortoise-shell spectacles; a spare, in case of emergency; specially esteemed for scratches on the lens, which came from the bottom of the swimming pool of M.S. *Santa Maria* en voyage to South America. Do not, no matter what stimu-

(*Continued on page* 20)

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Fellowship Prize Winner

SPANISH

The scene is Spain; the time is the eve of the revolution that swept Alfonso from his throne and set in train the tragic events of today; the book is such a narrative as Proust might have written from Paris in 1789 or Virginia Woolf from St. Petersburg in 1916.

Jenny Ballou is a true stylist, fired with Flaubert's ambition to write a book that will support itself by the internal force of its style as the earth is held in the air. Her book transcends all categories, and defies classification. It is the second of the Fellowship Prize Winners to be published, following E. P. O'Donnell's "Green Margins," a Book-of-the-Month Club selection for October. $2.50

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The Bowling Green

(*Continued from page* 17)

lus, dive into a swimming tank wearing your glasses.

(8.) A card, on which is written a quotation from Virgil's Eclogues (VIII, 75): *Numero deus impare gaudet* (God rejoices in the odd number) to remind me that there may be something in numerology after all.

(9.) A tobacco pouch, very handsome, in blue and gold silk. I don't use tobacco pouches either, but I can't forget this one. It was given to me by some still unidentified friend at a performance of *The Black Crook* in Hoboken. Inside was a note which said *To Mr. M., now producing the first Leg Show I ever saw.* This amuses me, and pleasantly recalls the great saying of Messrs. Jarrett and Palmer, the *Crook's* first management, in 1866:—"Legs are staple articles and will never go out of fashion."

(10.) Small water-color drawing brought me one snowy day by one of the Capitol policemen in Washington, who was on holiday.

(11.) Pot of vaseline, used (though not often enough) to mollify old leather bindings.

(12.) Another batch of postcards and small pictures. The high spots here are a reproduction of C. R. Patterson's painting of the *Cutty Sark,* and a drawing of the *Torrens* done by Captain Armitage McCann—who, if I remember, came to that ship as cabin-boy shortly after Joseph Conrad left her. Speaking of *Cutty Sark,* I hope it is always borne in mind that the name is a quotation from Burns (*Tam o' Shanter*). It means, of course, an abbreviated shift, which was the garment of souple Nannie in the poem. Why the great ship was so called I don't know. My copy of Lubbock's book on the clippers might tell, but is out on loan. My own idea is that (like Nannie) the name was boastful; to imply that even under shortened sail she could keep up with the best. The association with Scotch whiskey obviously came from Burns's closing lines—

> Whene'er to drink you are inclined
> Or cutty sarks run in your mind—

If we're not careful we'll find ourselves down in the nautical corner of the shelves with David Bone, Tomlinson, McFee, and many others. I hope all sea-minded readers keep in touch with James Brown & Son, the nautical publishers of Glasgow. (52 Darnley Street). The list of their books is always good for cheerful meditation. For fifteen years I've been meaning to write for old sea-dog Whall's *Shakespeare's Sea Terms Explained* ("Readers will be astonished to find that the plays are so rich in professionally used terms.") Their inexpensive reproductions of famous marine paintings are also tempting: if I had a bar-room I would certainly want *Wet Work in the Waist;* and I'm always fascinated by the idea of Captain Peterson's *Nautical Whist,* a card game that teaches you semaphore, flag and Morse signalling. Captain Maxwell's *Bright Star Atlas* I should be tempted to put alongside Keats's Sonnets.

How often I have dreamed of a leisurely loiter along these shelves with some special friend, attempting orderly to describe the things I have dear; but it seems almost impossible. The variety of their claims abashes me to silence. But *they* understand, my midnight darlings. For me, and I suppose irreparably for me only, they hold their secrets. I liked the idea of Harry Korner, bookseller in Cleveland, to take a piece of manuscript that he esteems and mount it, properly glazed and shielded, as a library lamp-shade. Thus your reading light would shine through the actual words that first said something you enjoyed. It reminds me of something Dr. Leonard Keeler and his associate Edwin O'Neill showed me at the Crime Detection Laboratory at Northwestern University. There they have invented a way of reviving the most faded or perished ink-script. Unless the actual fabric of the paper has been destroyed, the ink leaves iron residues; and by blowing a gas upon an apparently blank sheet these particles of iron can be corroded so that the former writing leaps to sight, now rusted brilliant red. It struck me that here was a shiny parable for teachers of literature. Their topic is often ancient books and papers, from which the childish pupil might suppose all life had withered. But if the teacher has the right kind of gas on spout, handwriting as old as Chaucer can burn again more vivid than tonight's tabloid. Presuming that it had, to begin with, the authentic mettle.

In this room, or any other of its kind, time is merely relative anyhow. In that same number of *The Colophon* I noticed a remark that its readers had chosen Sinclair Lewis as the American author now living "who has the best chance of being considered a classic in the year 2000." I suddenly realized that that year, which we used to take as a symbol of things wildly remote, really isn't far away. There are plenty of children now living, perhaps even my own, who will have the thrill of writing that date on paper.—Let's hope for a tinge of iron residue in the ink, so that 2000 (or even 1938) won't make a monkey of us.

I was looking through some books and catalogues about tobacco: I had it in mind to find something that would amuse Mr. W. H. of Chicago who has just taken up pipe-smoking. But I ran into another W. H., and found one of the grandest iron residues in literature, Hazlitt's glorious letter to Gifford, the Quarterly reviewer. Just the opening and closing lines, for a nightcap—

"Sir: You have an ugly trick of saying what is not true of any one you do not like; and it will be the object of this letter to cure you of it. . . . You are a nuisance, and should be abated."

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Outward Bound

THE good old Houseboat on the Styx (dipping her colors to John Kendrick Bangs) was out for the first cruise of spring. Among her various immortals there are always a few squabbles: Mark Twain had to take the wheel while Joseph Conrad and Captain Marryat argued a point of seamanship. Chaplain Weems was sulky because George Washington had called him a greater inventor than Edison. Some one wishing advice on an ecclesiastical detail called out, "Hey, Trollope!" and to every one's embarrassment Nell Gwynne responded. But now they all seemed to have settled down. In the bows Herman Melville and Izaak Walton exchanged yarns about fish. In the messroom Kipling was telling the Other Story; at the bar General Grant and Bret Harte were trying to keep Edgar Poe quiet while Conan Doyle imparted some of those unpublished adventures of Sherlock Holmes with which Dr. Watson tantalized us.

But they're at their best on controversial topics. Some of the phantoms had revisited mortal scenes, and Dickens complained about the condition in which he found his books. "Absolutely in rags," he said. "Worn to pieces. The library copies are a disgrace."

Henry James remarked that he hadn't found it so. "That is to say, of course, even with due consideration of the, shall we call them, relativities involved, I had not, myself, in respect of my own writings, been struck by any abnormal celerity of obsolescence."

There was a pause of politeness, which only Dr. Johnson could break.

"Sir," he said, "the caducity of covers is the premium of the bibliopole. It is mortality of stuff, sir, not merit of style, that causes scarcity; in any human œconomy, scarcity augments price. On the moribundity of matter *we* are surely authoritative."

"Would you say, Doctor," began Boswell hoping to delay him until he could find the notebook, but others broke in.

"Yea verily," said the shade of old Eliot, he of the first Indian Bible. "Why are the earliest Americana so rare? Because they were so weakly bound. Their physical disintegrity doomed them to perish—"

"And why not?" cried Sydney Smith (the Reverend). "Who reads an American book?"

"Sir," said the Doctor, "the plantations have ejected some fresh literary sprouts. A root will sporadicate even in a dungeon."

"I ask not equal length of life for all," interposed Will Shakespeare. "Some books are to be tasted, others swallowed; only a few to chew on and digest—Have I said that before?" he inquired. "It sounds familiar."

"*You* haven't," said John Bartlett whose encyclopedic spook is always aboard the boat to settle such matters. "Bacon has, the essay *Of Studies*."

"I don't want my books to be rare," exclaimed Dickens, who had been listening impatiently. "I want 'em to be read, and kept. I want them honestly and attractively bound, so they'll live and give pleasure, and even beauty on the shelves. We were proud of what we wrote, gentlemen, let us be proud of their mortal dress—"

At this moment the stowaway, a much alive salesman (probably called Pete) couldn't contain himself any longer. He burst into the discussion, eager to win friends and influence ghosts. "You are dead right, I mean definitely right: a book oughtn't to be just Outward Bound for show, it's got to be inward bound for use. Bound clear through to the spine, strong and openable and appropriate. If your Indian Bible (he bowed to old Puritan Eliot) had been put together the way we did *The Flowering of New England* it wouldn't be so scarce today. Listen, did you ever hear of a book that had harder handling than *Gone With the Wind*? We did that, and boy, how it stands up. We bound about 75 of this spring's leading titles, roll your eye over these samples: *The Nile*, *Angels in Undress*, *Jordanstown*, *Suns Go Down*, *Not So Deep as a Well*, *Today Is Forever*——"

The old houseboat was also gone with the wind, down winding reaches of the dusky stream. But there would be less ghostly bickering between decks, maybe, and fewer, shabby, broken and foundered volumes, if her immortals and their publishers, had known the latest efficiencies of the American Book Bindery-Stratford Press, Inc.

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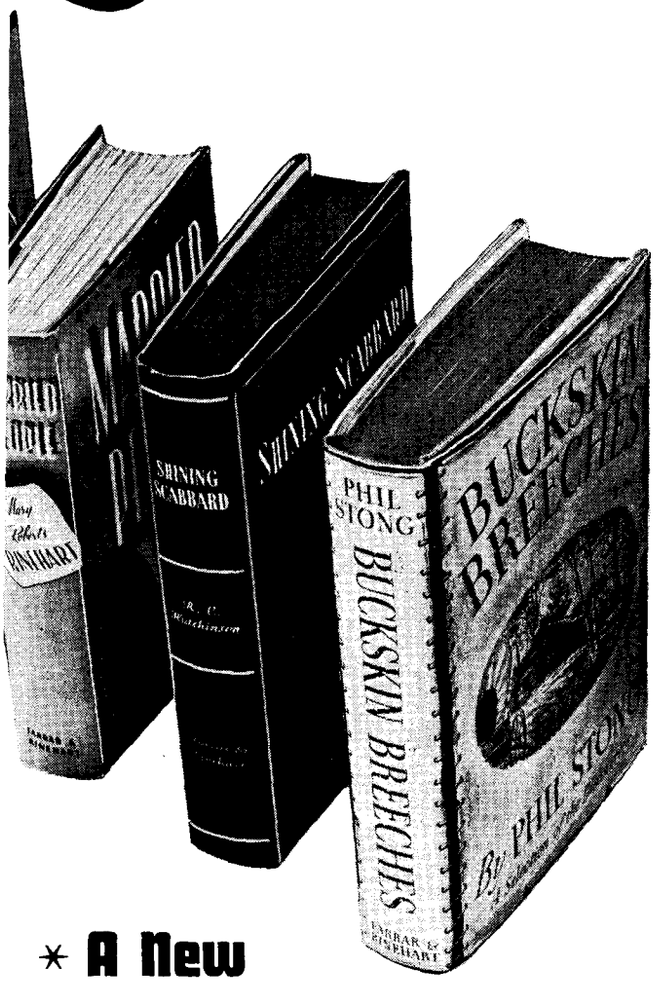

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English Ebb, American Flow

(*Continued from page 4*)

novel grew up with industrial democracy. It grew up unhurriedly with the railroads and the factory chimneys, thrived on their expansion, and in the complicated society which grew up between them, thriving on them too, found the material for its great spiritual conflicts and revelations.

But the American novel, as a body of writing, came in with a shout in the nineties or thereabouts, found its democracy already established, and began fighting at once. One of its enemies was the middle class conscience, which insisted that facts were improper when truthful, so that Stephen Crane had to publish his "Maggie" privately. The battle for the right to tell the truth is only just over; it was part of a larger battle in which the novel advanced against a whole way of life, not cautiously, but with astonishment, belligerence, impatience. Whatever other qualities it may have possessed or developed, these three are part of its life stream; and though they had nothing whatsoever to do with great literature like "Death Comes for the Archbishop," they have been responsible for great literature like "An American Tragedy."

Of course, there are libel laws, and people's feelings might be hurt, and there is always the esthetic conscience, a necessary arbiter. None the less, if the American novelist wants to speak out, he generally does so: he feels no shadowy censorship inside. Is this because American democracy regards its future with excitement rather than foreboding? Partly; and it is partly due to the fact that the American novelist never seems to have felt himself in debt to democracy, an ungrateful attitude, but helpful. Here is Daniel Fuchs's "Low Company" which, published in 1937, is a fairly recent example. Its scene is laid in Neptune Beach, which is near Manhattan, and might be Coney Island. It is summer, but no holiday spirit prevails: all is disorder and despair. Mr. Shubunka's brothel business and Mr. Spitzbergen's ice cream machine are wrecked by an organized racket, with police assistance; while Karty is to be beaten up for debt, *à la* Drukman; and Shorty is in trouble with sex and the platonic Madame Pavlovna.

The book is savagely outspoken, but the characters seem to lack an interior. Something stands between them and us, an impalpable barrier, which, on examination, proves to be Neptune Beach. There is a side of American life, something represented by Neptune Beach, and Mr. Fuchs wants to get at it. To get *at* it, but not inside it, or through it: had he done that, he would have written an extraordinary novel.

Well, there were certain aspects of pre-Rooseveltian unemployment which compelled Mr. Robert Nathan to write a fantasy called "One More Spring." If you compare American fantasy with English fantasy, you begin to understand something quite remote from either, such as the work of Mr. Daniel Fuchs. English fantasy is often abstract, unconcerned with right or wrong; but American fantasists prefer to anchor their work to the concrete, and the preference is characteristic. Indeed, so little does America care for abstractions that, if an interesting problem arises, the tendency has been to incarnate it in a novel. The function of the novel is to create human beings; its condition is that it should criticize society. But if you incarnate the problem—as, for example, Josephine Lawrence incarnated the family budget in "If I Have Four Apples"—then you substitute the condition for the function, and your publishers say that you have thrown "a really important light on the problems that assail every American family today," and the public rushes to buy you, and perhaps you have. But your novel may not survive.

Was Mr. Fuchs incarnating a problem? Not explicitly, but he never gets through the problematic barrier of Neptune Beach, behind which there wait, in unexplored darkness, the souls of Mr. Spitzbergen, Karty, Madame Pavlovna, and the rest. Was Mr. Farrell incarnating a problem in "Studs Lonigan?" Certainly. But Mr. Farrell, with an industrious and detailed passion, pulled the problem to bits in order to see what lay behind; in the course of which he created a human being.

If this tendency were not strong and persistent, the American novel could never have bent to its will a materialistic

(*Continued on page 28*)

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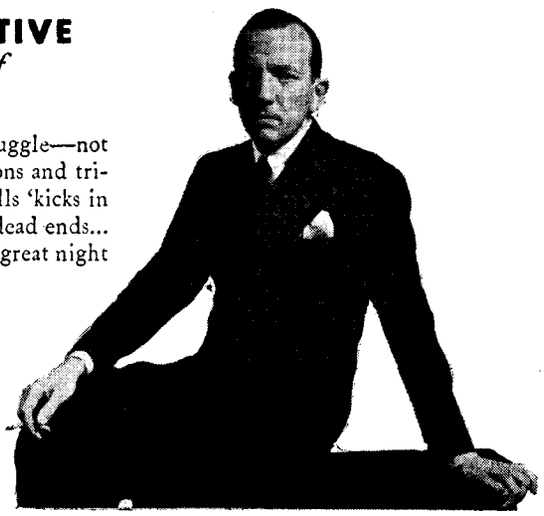

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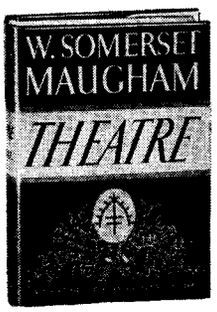

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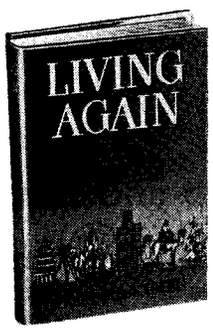

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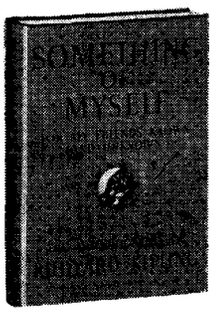

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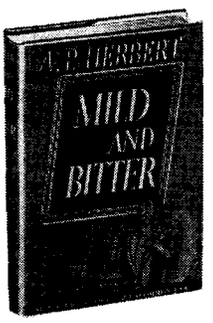

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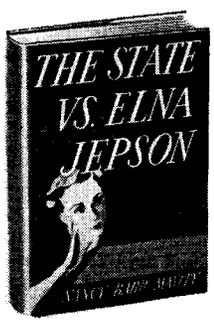
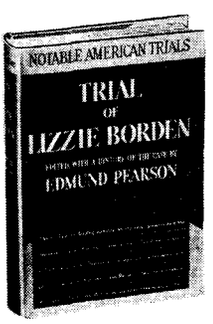


STATE VERSUS ELNA JEPSON is the dramatic and intensely human story of an innocent girl caught in the web of circumstance, on trial for her life for a murder she did not commit. It is written with almost unbearable suspense. As Paul Jordan-Smith says, in the Los Angeles *Times*, "Not for a moment may the reader's attention wander." **Nancy Barr Mavity,** the author, has covered many famous murder trials. $2.00



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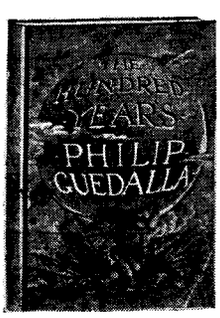

Philip Guedalla's THE HUNDRED YEARS is being read because it explains what went to make Europe and America what they are today; because it is history as swiftly paced, as fascinating as distinguished fiction. *Vogue* says, "Mr. Guedalla scrapes the skin off the last century, exposing the quick nerves linking the Western World together." 400 pages, illustrated with maps. Wrapper drawing by Rex Whistler. $3.00

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English Ebb, American Flow

(*Continued from page 26*)

civilization which is both vast and obstinate. And at the root of this tendency, as at the root of everything at all creative, there lies astonishment—an intense inner conviction that one is perceiving things as they have never been perceived before, that one's unique perception has brought them into existence. At present, the astonishment of the English novelist seems concentrated upon the social gestures of already familiar types: American astonishment is still concentrated upon the types. For example, there is "Of Mice and Men." John Steinbeck is in general inclined to blur the lines of his characters, but Lennie and George, though misted with their creator's sympathy, are new. They do not seem to have existed before. No doubt they have been wandering in and out of fiction for years; now at last they are rounded and real. To test their reality you have only to measure them against two absolutely stock characters in the same novel—Curley and his poor little bitch of a wife, both relics of earlier behaviorism, and both much the worse for wear.

"The Late George Apley," though Mr. Marquand is no artist as Mr. Steinbeck is, and though the ironical device which he employs throughout is so simple as to be childish, conveys the same air of discovery. The suprising, and motivating, force in the novel is Mr. Marquand's surprise. He has a quality which Mr. Maugham, far wiser, far more versed in reporting life, so conspicuously lacks—that is, he takes nothing for granted, everything is new, even the obvious; and his portrait of Boston society glows with colors which, though doomed to fade, delight us simply because they are so fresh.

I have mentioned Mr. Marquand, Mr. Steinbeck, and Mr. Fuchs because their work is recent, and without pretending that they illustrate more than a tendency or two to set off against what appears to be a prevailing tendency in the English novel. (For creative astonishment about the past, there is Andrew Lytle's "The Long Night," a wonderful book.) The Americans, not such artists in prose, not always so subtle in perception, represent expansion: the English, contraction. The Americans are still exploring society, and promise more discoveries: the English have their eyes on the present and reveal only its familiar pattern. The flood tide: the ebb tide. Still, there remains the fact that tides turn, and perhaps some such motion is already beginning, with characteristic caution, in English fiction today. Art anticipates life, and the turning of *that* tide will be more than just literary history.

George Dangerfield is the author of "The Strange Death of Liberal England."

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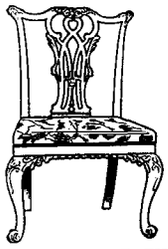

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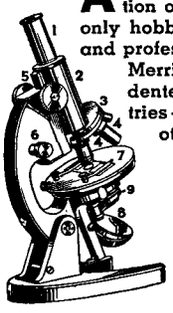

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Go to Sleep and Live

ZEST FOR LIFE. By Johan Wøller. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1937. $2.50.

FOR thirty years Dr. Wøller practiced medicine in the tropics, but his is no such clinical record as we have had repeatedly.

His travels in three dimensions, in the actual present, in memory, and in wishful dreams, make excellent bedtime reading. They have no order to them and are built upon the thinnest web of correlation; the great towns of modern Europe and the ancient jungles of the East glimmer sleepily as the author recalls them from yesterday and thirty years ago.

Even when the blade of rattan swung for the sixtieth time against the body of his prisoner in Sumatra Dr Wøller lay dreaming of beauty; his zest for living was of an hypnotic sort which accepted necessity, then as later in Cairo when the ostriches did their indecent dance, or when in Nice he found he must pay exorbitantly for a decent meal. And beauty drove him everywhere, leading him up and down the world in real and imaginary vehicles while he philosophized upon such a variety of things as the Zionist movement, unemployment in Java, and the ruins of religion. He was an acute observer; his stories of ants marching, of termites mating in the sky, are as memorable as those of Fabre.

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Art of the Night

BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

WHILE this department is consecrated to a consideration of that portion of the drama that pretends to literature and while the generality of crook, mystery, and murder tales hardly comes under the heading of belles-lettres save occasionally in the strainfully affected estimation of otherwise critically solvent gentlemen (at the time usually more or less in their cups), a sabbatical five or six hundred words may be allowed the subject. With the stage liberally opening its proscenium to plays of the species and with publishers liberally spending money on the book publication of them, the few words may be forgiven.

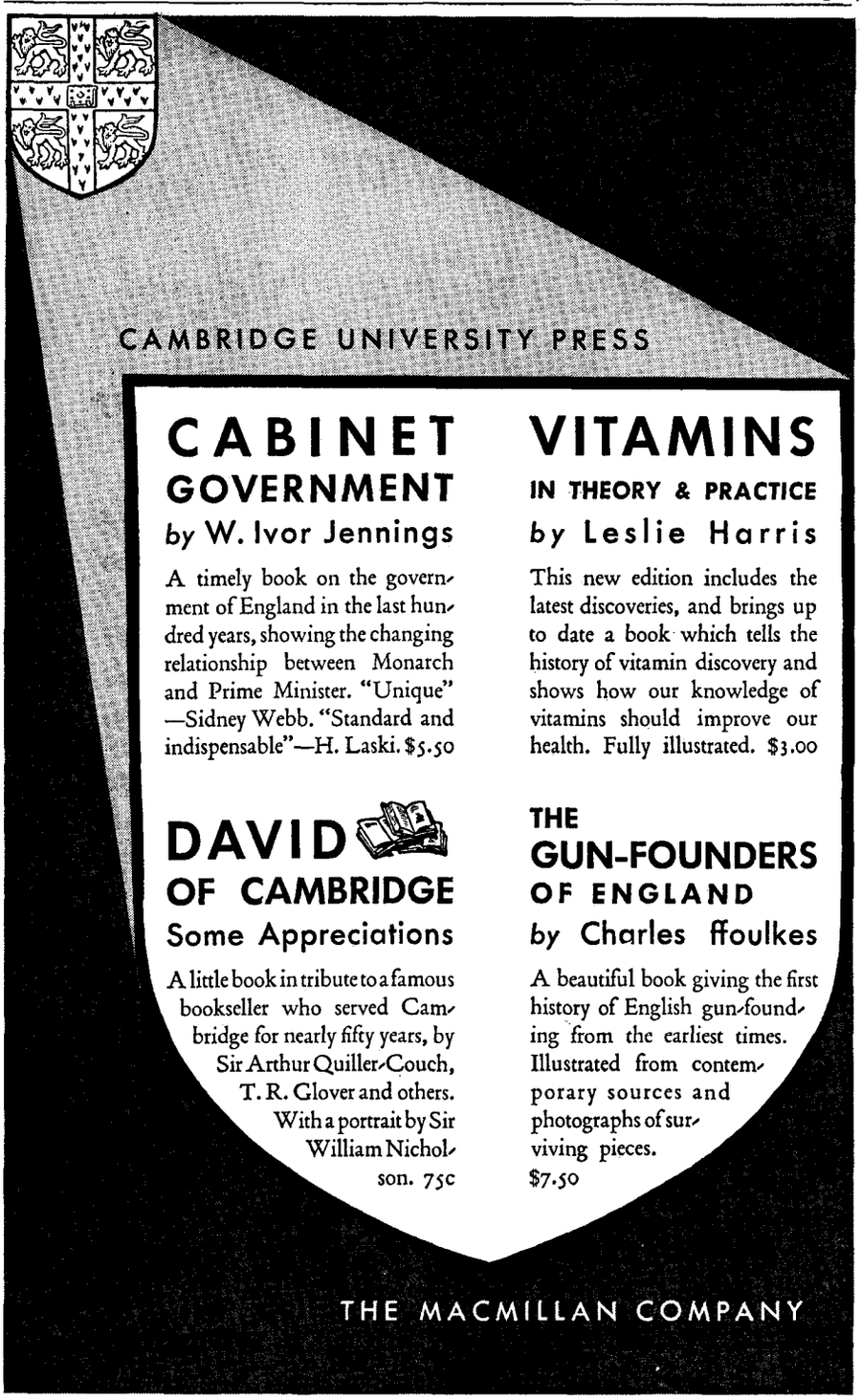
Among the plays in the category that have been shown and here and there published since the beginning of the current season are five English importations: "Night Must Fall," by Emlyn Williams, "Love From a Stranger," by Frank Vosper, "Black Limelight," by Gordon Sherry, "The Holmeses of Baker Street," by Basil Mitchell, and "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse," by Barré Lyndon.

The murder plays by the Messrs. Williams, Vosper, and Sherry, like many other British plays in the same catalogue, all dealt with some form of pathological degeneracy and relied for their effect upon macabre horror. For such exhibitions the American public has uniformly indicated a keen disrelish. In the records of the latter-day local stage, no play of the kind has won enough patronage to make it pay. Why it should be so, I do not know, but the fact seems to be that, of all the larger nations in the western world, the United States is the only one whose audiences gag at pathological Grand Guignolism. The French love it; the Germans, at least up to the time Hitlerism forcefully took it away from them, gleefully ate it up; and the English will apparently lay out a theatrical fortune whenever one of their stages discloses a pervert stuffing the severed *pomum Adami* of an Oxford undergraduate into his hat-box and then sitting fiendishly on the hat-box for the rest of the evening. Neither inversion, perversion, nor profuse Rue Chaptal sputum is in such countries offensive to the box-office. But here things are otherwise.

Perversion in itself is not unwelcome to American audiences, as the success of such plays as "The Captive," "The Green Bay Tree," *et al.*, has sufficiently attested. But it seems to be the peculiar fact that it is acceptable only when it is not treated melodramatically. Again, I do not know why. Yet let a playwright combine the two and American playgoers will give him a wide berth. And let him add to the melodramatic treatment of perversion even so much as a trace of Grand Guignolism and the berth will take on the width of the Grand Canyon. This is true even in the instance of one-act plays, as was proved by the prompt failure of the little degenerate horror pieces brought over from France and England some years ago in an attempt to inaugurate a Max Maurey theatre on local soil.

We come to the relative lack of success customarily enjoyed by the imported English crook plays. The trouble with these so far as American audiences go is that English crooks, however agile, inevitably seem a bit tame and even sissified compared with the American variety. The English crook, paradoxical as it is to the foreigner, has an ingrained respect for British law and order. Although he may flout that law and order, the respect and awe in which he holds it is generally and clearly discernible in his born nature. That the American crook is a fowl of quite another color need not here be indicated. And the result is that the English crook play often essentially amounts, in the local appraisal, to little more than a polite drawing-room melodrama peopled by certain characters in impolite clothes. It lacks the vulgarity that is handmaiden to excitement. It watches its words. And it seems and sounds, alongside the heartiness and robustiousness of its American counterpart, like a cap-pistol, carefully polished.

"The Holmeses of Baker Street" presented Sherlock as a gaga papa. The producers could not understand why audiences would not accept the play. The producers would probably be unable to understand why audiences would not accept "Uncle Tom's Cabin" with Little Eva in a gray wig and on crutches.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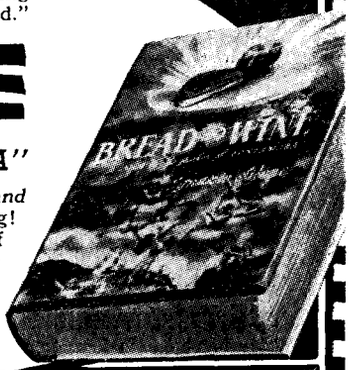

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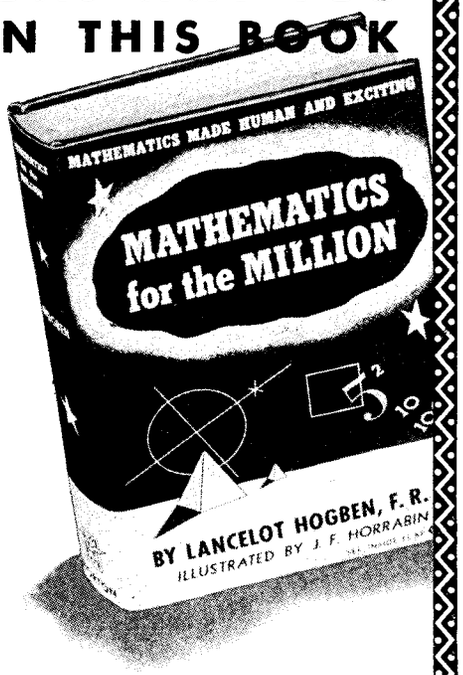

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Reviewing Reviews

STEINBECK'S "Of Mice and Men" has had an enormous press, and over ninety percent of the notices are in the nature of raves. There's no point in quoting from many of the individual reviews, which have pretty much said the same thing in different terms. High note of enthusiasm is Harry Hansen's in the *N. Y. World-Telegram*—he called "Of Mice and Men" "the finest bit of prose fiction of this decade." More temperate than the majority were Clifton Fadiman in *The New Yorker* and John Chamberlain in *Scribner's*. Mark Van Doren, in *The Nation*, struck a resounding sour note in the reviewers' chorus: "All is extreme here; everybody is a doll; and if there is a kick in the story it is given us from some source which we cannot see, . . . as when in the middle of the night the telephone rings sharply and it is the wrong number. We shall remember it about that long."

All these are honest differenees of opinion, proving only that there is no accounting for tastes—a point over which this department need not linger. More egregious points are raised by two items in the collection—one from *Time*, the other from *The Ladies' Home Journal*—which we present as curiosa.

We will not quote the *Time* review in full, because it devotes its first two paragraphs to the sort of detailed synopsis calculated to spoil the pleasure of any one intending to read "Of Mice and Men." There are probably some readers of the *SRL* who would prefer to get the dénouement of the story from Mr. Steinbeck than from a weekly news magazine. *Time's* last paragraph comes close to being unique in literary criticism:

"To Americans whose eyes are still smarting from the unhappy ending of the Wall Street fairy tale of 1929, John Steinbeck's little dream story will not seem out of line with reality; they may even overlook the fact that it too is a fairy tale. An oxymoronic combination of the tough & tender, 'Of Mice and Men' will appeal to sentimental cynics, cynical sentimentalists. Critic Christopher Morley found himself 'purified' by this 'masterpiece . . . written in purest compassion and truth.' Readers less easily thrown off their trolley will still prefer Hans Andersen."

Ben Abramson of the Chicago book trade has sent this department a copy of a letter he wrote to *Time*, which *Time* has not yet (March 29) printed. We quote in part: "Your reviewer details the plot from beginning to end. . . . Then, in a brief commentary covering one paragraph, he calls the book 'a fairy tale,' thus misrepresenting both the author's intention and his achievement. . . . He concludes with a sneer . . . which could have been introduced only for the purpose of sneering. . . . 'Cynical sentimentalists and sentimental cynics,' if such existed, would not like this book, but they might write such reviews—reviews that are brightly obscure, that deceptively inform, that energetically fail to serve their purpose."

Exhibit B we quote from Dorothy Canfield Fisher's review in *The Ladies' Home*

(*Continued on page* 43)

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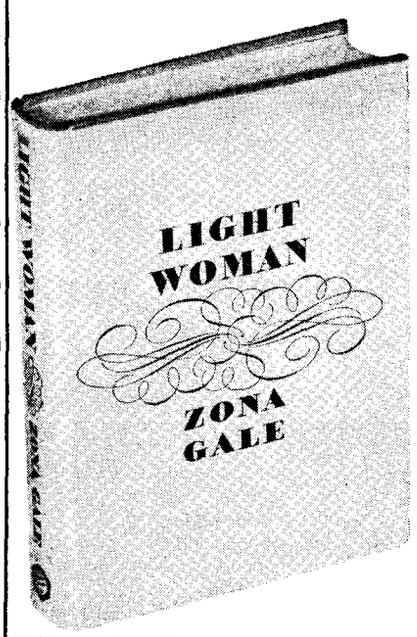
New Novel by the Author of "MISS LULU BETT"

LIGHT WOMAN

by Zona Gale



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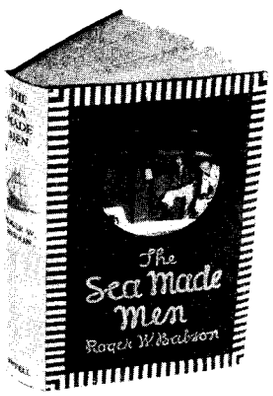
The SEA MADE MEN
The Chronicle of a Gloucester Lad



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Books of the Spring

BY AMY LOVEMAN

MANNERS, said Pope, turn with fortunes, and tenets with books. Yes, but books also turn with tenets, to judge from the fashion in which they keep pace with the current debate on matters of public concern. The New Deal gets into hot water with the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court finds itself in disfavor with the President, and forthwith there are such volumes announced as "Constitutional Government and Politics" (Harpers), by Carl Joachim Friedrichs of Harvard, or "The Power to Govern—The Constitution Then and Now" (Norton), by Walton H. Hamilton of Yale, or Burton Hendricks's "The Constitution, An American Biography" (Little, Brown), or "The Ultimate Power" (Doubleday, Doran), a discussion of the Supreme Court, by Morris L. Ernst. Here is a group of books that form a solid phalanx of scholarly achievement among the mushroom growth of articles and books that are rushed from the press with every sensational governmental development. The man with an interest in public affairs will find them reading to his taste. So will he, too, if his interest extends to matters of foreign policy, and the precarious state of Europe wakes his concern, find absorbing reading in such works as E. B. Ashton's "The Fascist: His State and His Mind" (Morrow), a study of dictatorship in both Italy and Germany which attempts to analyze the psychology of their peoples as well as to survey their methods of government; Leon Trotsky's philippic against Stalin's Russia, "The Revolution Betrayed" (Doubleday, Doran); Anna Louise Strong's "The New Soviet Constitution" (Holt); and "Collectivism: A False Utopia"* (Macmillan), by W. H. Chamberlin, author of "Soviet Russia."

Mr. Chamberlin has a chapter in a volume that should prove highly interesting to newspaper readers to whom the bylines over the dispatches from foreign correspondents have rendered the names of its contributors familiar. This is "We Cover the World"* (Harcourt, Brace), edited by Eugene Lyons, in which sixteen foreign correspondents present outstanding experiences in their long service. Good, spicy reading it makes, full of color and adventure, and touching on great events and persons. It is a sort of omnium gatherum for the men who have several of them not long since published volumes of reminiscences of their own. There have been many memoirs of such sort, volumes like Wythe Williams's "Dusk of Empire" (Scribners) and Felix Wittmer's "Floodlight over Europe"* (Scribners), to name but two. Here, further, are three more books for the internationally-minded, "The Private Manufacture of Armaments" (Oxford University Press), by Philip Noel-Baker, "Neutrality for the United States"* (Yale University Press), by Edwin M. Borchard, and General Ludendorff's "The Nation at War"* (Hillman-Curl).

* Books marked with asterisks have not yet been published.

The same reader who has special interest in the constitutional problems of his country will no doubt be an excellent prospect (to use the jargon of business) for such works as Charles Rumford Walker's study of Minneapolis entitled "American City: A Rank and File History" (Farrar & Rinehart), and for Robert S. Lynd's "Middletown in Transition"* (Harcourt, Brace), an exceedingly interesting discussion of what boom and depression have done to the community which Mr. Lynd so illuminatingly analyzed ten years ago. And just by way of abruptly throwing in something for the general reader who may have no concern with cities and problems of government but a lively interest in problems of another sort I insert here the titles of two recent books for those who like that kind of thing—"Mathematics for the Million" (Norton), by Lancelot Hogben, and "Men of Mathematics" (Simon & Schuster), by E. T. Bell. (As for myself I can only quote, "If you like that kind of thing, it is the kind of thing you like," which is entirely a reflection on my unmathematical mind and not at all on the books which I am told by those entitled to speak are excellent.)

I see the handwriting on the wall, and the inexorable limitations of space already necessitating a truncated list unless I make haste more rapidly. So without more ado I pass on to fiction, and first of all to the type of novel very prominent in this season's grist, the novel of historical, even if recent historical, background. First the American tale—Phil Stong's "Buckskin Breeches"* (Farrar & Rinehart), a story of Iowa in the 1800's; "In the Lives of Men"* (Norton), by Alan Hart, pioneer and boom days in the Northwest; "Gentlemen from England" (Macmillan), by Maude and Delos Lovelace, Minnesota in its youth; Walter Havighurst's "The Quiet Shore" (Macmillan), Ohio at the opening of the century; August Derleth's "Still Is the Summer Night" (Scribners), rural Wisconsin in the eighties; "Gallows Hill" (Holt), by Frances Winwar, Salem in the late seventeenth century; "Paradise" (Harcourt, Brace), by Esther Forbes, colonial Massachusetts with a background carefully and impressively worked out; and "The Sea of Grass" (Knopf), by Conrad Richter, early days in the Southwest. Next, two English historical novels "Queen's Folly" (Harcourt, Brace), by Elswyth Thane, beginning in Elizabeth's time and coming down through the centuries to the present, and "The Stranger Prince" (Harcourt, Brace), by Margaret Irwin, a tale of Prince Rupert; then the continental tales surveying the contemporary scene or the very recent rather than the more distant past—Ignazio Silone's "Bread and Wine" (Harpers), a portrayal of fascist Italy, Valentine Kataev's "Peace Is Where the Tempests Blow" (Farrar & Rinehart) with a Russian background; Erich Maria Remarque's "Three Comrades"* (Little, Brown), a highly reveal-

(*Continued on page* 39)

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The Clearing House

CONDUCTED BY AMY LOVEMAN

Inquiries, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, should be directed to Miss Loveman, in care of The Saturday Review.

An Omnibus Reply

THERE has been collecting for some time a large number of letters asking information on a variety of subjects which, now that the spring cleaning fever is about to descend on the land, I shall hustle out of the way to make room for what the coming weeks may bring. *L. P. of Cheltenham, Pa.*, for instance, who wants "a list of books on marionettes, how to make them, plays, and something of their history or origin," will find Helen Haiman Joseph's A BOOK OF MARIONETTES (Viking) comprehensive, authoritative, and illuminating, an excellent volume to use as the basis of her study. With it she could read to advantage Remo Buffano's BE A PUPPET SHOWMAN (Appleton-Century) and THE TONY SARG MARIONETTE BOOK (Viking), edited by F. J. McIsaac, and especially directed to children. *V. F. of Blacksburg, Va.*, asks for "a book or two which contain adequate illustration of the main types of American antique furniture, and for a volume (if there is one) written for the amateur cabinet maker." EARLY AMERICAN FURNITURE (Appleton-Century), by Charles O. Cornelius, assistant curator of American art of the Metropolitan Museum, is lavishly illustrated. A second book, if she wishes more than one, that will meet her needs is Esther Singleton's THE FURNITURE OF OUR FOREFATHERS (Doubleday, Doran). This went out of print a few years ago but has, I believe, since been reissued in new format. Longmans, Green issues a useful handbook by Alfred L. Keeble, entitled CABINET MAKING, which contains information on tools, appliances, methods, etc., and Wiley publishes FUNDAMENTALS OF THE WOODWORKING TRADES, by J. F. Reid and G. H. Higgins, which is likewise a valuable manual for the beginner. Book collecting interests *B. McM. of Port Angeles, Washington;* she would like the titles of books to start her properly on her hobby. My neighbor of the Compleat Collector, John P. Winterich, brought out some years ago what is an excellent introductory volume for the prospective collector, which he called A PRIMER OF BOOK COLLECTING (Greenberg). This should give B. McM. enough specific information to set her on her way; some idea of what it is worth while to collect, how to go about securing the books, what are the qualities to look for and which the pitfalls against which the collector must be on guard. If she wants a volume that will justify to herself the hobby she is developing and which will fill her bosom with a pleasant glow she should read Christopher Morley's EX LIBRIS CARISSIMIS (Oxford University Press), a little volume compiled from lectures the author delivered at the University of Pennsylvania. And then, as a fillip to all else she has read, she should procure Holbrook Jackson's ANATOMY OF BIBLIOMANIA (Scribners). Next in order comes an inquiry from *H. W. O. of Manchester, Mo.*, as to whether there are biographies of Josh Billings and Petroleum V. Nasby in existence. THE DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (Scribners) contains entries on both, of course, though only cross-references appear under their pseudonyms. To find the articles H. W. O. should look for Billings under Henry Wheeler Shaw and for Nasby under David Ross Locke. There is a biography, entitled JOSH BILLINGS, YANKEE HUMORIST (The Author: Webster Groves, Mo.), by Cyril Clemens, and Janet R. Tandy's CRACKERBOX PHILOSOPHERS IN AMERICAN HUMOR AND SATIRE (Columbia University Press) contains material on the humorist. Both these books have bibliographies. Robert Ford's AMERICAN HUMORISTS, RECENT AND LIVING, has a chapter on Petroleum V. Nasby. I shake the hat and out comes a letter from *T. H. of Marion, Ohio,* in which he states that he wants a book explaining the principles of freight traffic work, rates, etc. What he desires is a volume of elementary, rather school-book nature, explaining the rudiments of this somewhat involved subject. INDUSTRIAL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT (McGraw-Hill), by Leslie Aulls Bryan, seems to be indicated. This is a text for college classes, but useful also

(*Continued on page* 43)

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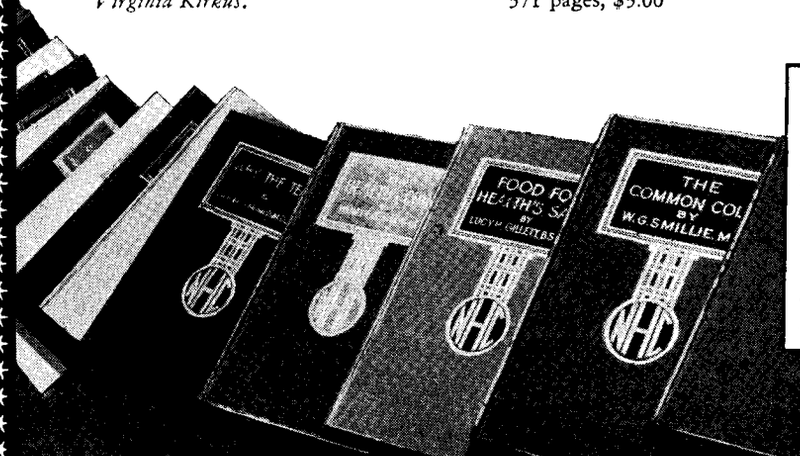

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The Amen Corner

"Fanny Brawne . . . at last achieves a life of her own," wrote Lewis Gannett in the *New York Herald Tribune*, on reading the *Letters of Fanny Brawne to Fanny Keats*, 1820-4[1] which the Oxford University Press[2] published a few weeks ago, 31 hitherto unpublished letters in a beautifully produced volume. Our picture, from a miniature in the possession of Fanny Brawne's grand-daughter, Mrs. Oswald Ellis, is one of the illustrations.

"Fanny Brawne," wrote Herschel Brickell in the *New York Post* "stands revealed in an entirely new light. . . . This is a Keats item of the first importance and intrinsically interesting as well. It is beautifully designed and printed."

Said the *New York Times*, "Justice has delayed a century, but it is done at last in the love story of John Keats and Fanny Brawne."

That love story, by an interesting coincidence, has been the subject this season of a Broadway play, *Aged 26 A Play About John Keats*, by Anne Crawford Flexner.[3] (She is the wife of Abraham Flexner, author of *Universities: American, English, German.*[4]) It is a play which achieves the difficult feat of giving an altogether convincing portrait of Keats, and, as Christopher Morley said, "gives the Keats lover a happy tingle."

One of the principal characters is, of course, Charles Brown, and the Oxford Press has also just brought out *Some Letters and Miscellanea of Charles Brown*,[5] edited by Maurice Buxton Forman, who edited the splendid (*and* inexpensive) edition of the *Letters of John Keats.*[6]

A fourth item of interest to Keats lovers is the *Life of John Keats*, by the same Brown, which, though it is the only portrait of Keats made by an intimate friend, has astonishingly remained unpublished since it was first written in 1830! We advise you to enter your order for this while you are ordering the others. It is expected to be ready in May.

Speaking of forthcoming books, the Oxonian is particularly excited about a new book for children—*Sabu, The Elephant Boy*,[7] by Frances Flaherty, wife of Robert Flaherty, the director of *Man of Aran* and the new Korda film *Elephant Boy*. It is the delightful true story of an orphan boy in India, who, almost by accident, was chosen to play the lead in the film. The illustrations from the film and from photographs taken on location in Mysore, are superb—and fascinating not only to any child but to any lover of children or elephants. You may be able to resist children, but who can resist an elephant? You must not miss *Sabu!*

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(1) $3.00. (2) 114 Fifth Avenue, New York. (3) $1.50. (4) $3.50. (5) $3.00. (6) In 1 vol., $5.00 (7) $1.00.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE PARADOXES OF MR. POND *G. K. Chesterton* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Mr. Pond—to whom whatever is, is probably two other Irishmen one of whom is an Eskimo—solves 8 puzzling cases.	Quintessential Chesterton, with sparkling surface masking frequent emotional deeps, amusing, full of surprises, supremely readable.	Masterpiece
THE THIRTEENTH BED IN THE BALLROOM *Esther Haven Fonseca* (Crime Club: $2.)	Two mysterious deaths in business woman's lodging house solved by Margo Carver and Detective Jarnow.	Novel and interesting locale, revealing glimpses of feminine temperament, action, and logical sleuthing.	Competent
THE TINY DIAMOND *Charlotte Murray Russell* (Crime Club: $2.)	Jane Amanda Edwards, vacationing in Chicago apt. house, runs into polygonal murder case and solves it by pertinacious snooping.	Most amusing feminine amateur sleuth since the immortal Tish drives police, assorted suspects, and reader quite gorgeously mad.	Swell
THE CAT CLIMBS *C. A. Tarrant* (Lippincott: $2.)	Peter Dean, clerk, turned cat-burglar, pulls off amazing coups, all with high-minded and slightly ridiculous motive.	Despite rather nonsensical overtones, about as exhilarating a game of tag with the cops as any reader could ask.	Good
HARNESS BULL *Leslie White* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.)	Two days and a night in a city detective chief's life and what they bring to light.	About as real, rough, and raw a book as we've had on the way run-of-the-mill crimes are solved.	Knock-out!
CRIME, CROOKS AND COPS *August Vollmer and A. E. Parker* (Funk & Wagnalls: $2.) (Non-fiction)	Prof. of Police Administration at Univ. of Cal. tells how science tracks down criminals, with many fascinating examples.	Much vivid material about modern detective methods and some wise words about those who make and break the law.	Instructive
MYSTERY AT THE RECTORY *A. E. Fielding* (Kinsey: $2.)	Rural English philanderer's "accidental" death is followed by rector's poisoning and other sinister happenings which keep Insp. Pointer stepping.	Toadstool poisoning, jewel robberies, feminine jealousy, and scandalous family secrets dished up in customarily competent English fashion.	Average
WAYS OF DEATH *Hans C. Owen* (Green Circle: $2.)	Alumnus killed on college "tap day." Detective Cusani and fat Professor Trout trail an elusive killer.	Plenty of action, color, and some pseudo highbrow humor, but solution is on the unfair side.	Annoying
THE MILL HOUSE MURDER *J. S. Fletcher* *(finished by "Torquemada")* (Knopf: $2.)	Deadly bludgeoning of elderly Yorkshire mill-owner planning matrimony involves hopeful nephews, their irate ma—and Mr. Camberwell.	Industrious London detective uncovers a whole catacomb of small-town family skeletons with melodramatic but highly exciting results.	Fitting farewell
SEVEN WERE VEILED *Kathleen Moore Knight* (Crime Club: $2.)	Death of hard-hearted father at foster-daughter's tragic wedding rehearsal provides nice problem for S'lectman Elisha Macomber of Penbirthy Island.	Deadly toadstools, poisonous hair tonic, bit of gunplay, Cape Cod canniness, sentimental sweetening, and a surprise unmasking at the finish.	Able
ON THE NIGHT OF THE 18TH *Lawrence Meynell* (Harpers: $2.)	Crabbed, miserly, and vicious English squire properly slain. Inspector Hylton, between chess and hunting, sifts large number of suspects.	Solution depends on "circumstances and woman" rather than detective's cleverness, in story with plenitude of torrid bucolic lubricity.	Readable
MURDER ON THE MOUNTAIN *Christine Noble Gavan* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Colored maid and guest at Southern house party ruthlessly envenomed. Rank amateur does most of the detecting.	Much interesting toxicological information, some keen characterizations—and not much else to recommend it.	Undistinguished

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Books of the Spring

(*Continued from page* 34)

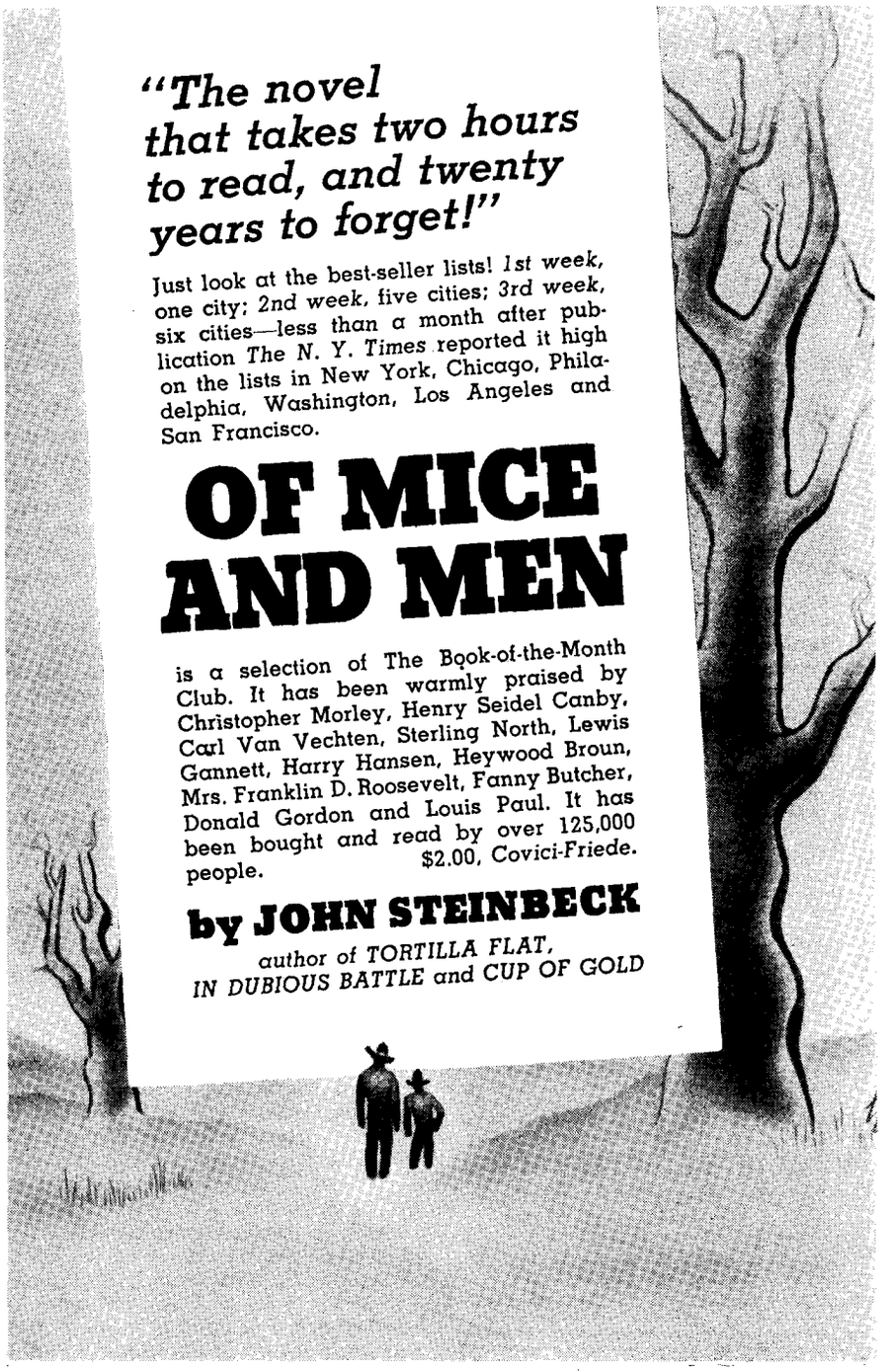
ing picture of post-war Germany; Franz Werfel's "Twilight of a World" (Viking), which depicts the last stages of the Austrian Empire, and Maxence van der Meersch's "Invasion" (Viking), a vivid recreation of the bitter days of German occupation in France during the World War.

There is, of course, a group of novels which are of the immediate present, concerned with the stresses and distresses of the time. Such are Josephine Johnson's "Jordanstown" (Simon & Schuster), whose proletarian thesis does more credit to the author's heart than her art; Evelyn Scott's "Bread and Sword"* (Scribners), a long novel, showing the havoc unemployment can work on character; Grant Lewi's "The Gods Arrive" (Lippincott); "Thieves Like Us" (Stokes), by Edwin Anderson; Wellington Roe's "The Tree Falls South"* (Putnam), a tale of the Kansas drought; Hope Williams Sykes's "The Joppa Door"* (Putnam), Meyer Levin's "The Old Bunch" (Viking), and Edwin Seaver's "Between the Hammer and the Anvil" (Messner), a novel of the depression.

Perhaps the outstanding novel of the Spring season as yet to have been published is John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men" (Covici-Friede), a forthright but tender tale, done with extreme economy of means, and effecting with consummate success the difficult feat of arousing sympathy for a defective. It shows again that Mr. Steinbeck is an author whose every new book proves the variety of his talent. Soon to come is Virginia Woolf's "The Years"* (Harcourt, Brace). This is Virginia Woolf in her earlier manner and of course an artist of stature. Other English writers of note appear among the authors of the season, H. G. Wells with a brief tale of psychological import, "The Croquet Player" (Viking), H. M. Tomlinson with "Pipe All Hands,"* a sea story commonplace as a novel but full of the kind of writing and feeling that adorns everything its author attempts; Somerset Maugham, with "Theatre" (Doubleday, Doran); Compton MacKenzie with "East Wind" (Dodd, Mead); Rose Macaulay and Mary Borden with light novels, "I Would Be Private" (Harpers) and "Action for Slander" (Harpers), and James Hilton with "We Are Not Alone" (Little, Brown).

Mention should be made, also (I mention them in no sort of order or grouping), of Cecil Day Lewis's "The Friendly Tree" (Harpers), a light and pleasant first novel; Zona Gale's "Light Woman" (Appleton-Century); Gladys Hasty Carroll's "Neighbor to the Sky"* (Macmillan); Jenny Ballou's "Spanish Prelude" (Houghton Mifflin), Edwin Lanham's "Banner at Daybreak" (Longmans, Green); George Albee's "Young Robert" (Reynal & Hitchcock), "The Laurels Are Cut Down" (Reynal & Hitchcock), by Archie Binns, "They Came Like Swallows"* (Harpers), by William Maxwell, and a short novel by a new writer, Clyde Brion Davis, whose "The Anointed"* (Farrar & Rinehart) marks him out as some one to be watched.

I was about to embark on biography, when it became apparent that I had exhausted my space. I'll resume next week.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OF MICE AND MEN
is a selection of The Book-of-the-Month Club. It has been warmly praised by Christopher Morley, Henry Seidel Canby, Carl Van Vechten, Sterling North, Lewis Gannett, Harry Hansen, Heywood Broun, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Fanny Butcher, Donald Gordon and Louis Paul. It has been bought and read by over 125,000 people. $2.00, Covici-Friede.
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The New Books

Belles Lettres

BOOKS AND BATTLES: AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1920-1930. By Irene and Allen Cleaton. Houghton Mifflin. 1937. $3.

Mr. and Mrs. Cleaton look upon the decade of the twenties as a long literary cocktail party. Young intellectuals led by Mencken and Scott Fitzgerald revolted against Puritanism; little magazines bloomed in Greenwich Village back yards; John S. Sumner and the Watch and Ward Society conducted long but losing battles against the tide; everybody read "The Story of Philosophy" and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes;" humanism rose and fell; sex in literature went on the loose; finally came the sunset, and the expatriates' return. Everybody had a good time but woke up with a hangover.

The Cleatons' book is admittedly superficial; there is very little in it about the really good books of the twenties, and the subtitle is misleading; but there would be no point in arguing about a few mistaken estimates of writers, or more than a few inaccurate interpretations of events. The authors apparently are younger than the younger generation of the twenties; they are on the outside looking in, and they think they are at the zoo. This is all right with the present reviewer, because they have written a lively and amusing book.

G. S.

PROFESSOR AT BAY. By Burges Johnson. Putnams. 1937. $2.

There used to be too many writing the personal essay. Now there are too few. Burges Johnson is an old hand at turning acute observation and reasoned thought into the pleasant reflections of the essay. This book has no unity except Mr. Johnson's mind. It ranges from comments on college education, many of them very shrewd, to personal experience in many places, humorous comment on the habits of the race. Note particularly his Chapter Twelve on Joiners. When the taste for reading with a bouquet to it comes back, this book should be appreciated. And it seems to be coming back now.

H. S. C.

Biography

SHOWMAN. By William A. Brady. Dutton. 1937. $3.

No figure in the world of the Broadway theatre is better known than William A. Brady, and his association with champions of the squared circle is a matter of history. His autobiography is more thoroughly readable than those of most impresarios of his kind. It has pace, excitement, humor, and that rough-and-ready sentiment dear to the Irish.

Mr. Brady is grateful to the Bowery for his early days. His father literally kidnapped him from California when divorce gave him into the custody of his mother. A brilliant but erratic journalist, the elder Brady soon passes out of the picture and the New York Press Club made a day-steward of the hero of this saga. Earlier the old melodrama and the old variety houses at Broadway and Houston had enthralled the boy Brady. Soon he developed a unique messenger service concerning sporting events at Gilmore's Garden later to be rebuilt as the original Madison Square. Fired from the Press Club he became a "peanut-butcher" out West, and landed in the theatre-mad San Francisco of the early eighties.

Brady's early theatrical experiences are told with characteristic gusto. His anecdotes of Tom-shows, stooging for a hypnotist, and playing in a saloon-theatre are full of color. The narrative speeds along to first flirtations with the films in their infancy, and to his dabbling in bicycle racing and other sports and amusements that could be promoted. The episode of the Boer War veterans, of the terrible Iroquois Theatre fire in Chicago, —the sidelights thrown on the early days of Helen Hayes, Douglas Fairbanks, Adolph Zukor, and Marcus Loew—all this material helps constitute a brimful story of show-business up to the last page. Mr. Brady writes exactly as he must talk in expansive moments, putting on no lugs and missing no laughs. We dare say he could write a second volume of reminiscences with equal ease. As it is he has given us a vivid document of the old theatrical and sporting days dedicated with his best wishes to the "young hopefuls" of our own time.

W. R. B.

Fiction

I WOULD BE PRIVATE. By Rose Macaulay. Harpers. 1937. $2.50.

It was only a matter of time of course before the Dionne quintuplets should make their appearance in fiction, for the wonder of their survival and the publicity that beat upon them could not fail to make good copy. They offered a happy opportunity for a writer, possessed, like Miss Macaulay, of a keen eye for situation and an ironic appreciation of the oddities of behavior, but unfortunately she has muffed the chance to make more than a mildly pleasant book of her parody of the excitement aroused by Dr. Dafoe's charges.

"I Would Be Private" takes from the Dionne episode only the fact of the quintuple birth and the popular interest aroused by it. For immediately Miss Macaulay's young London bobby and his wife find the world beating a track to their door to behold the marvel of their infants, they weary of living in the glare of publicity and to escape it set forth for whatever foreign shore seems to promise seclusion. Here before long the world finds them out, and here after a stalwart effort to resist all attempts to persuade them to make profit from their children they resign themselves to following their father's advice and raking in the shekels.

Before Miss Macaulay leaves the McBrowns reaping a fortune from charging admission to view their children, she has introduced a varied group of characters—a minister and his daughters, Oxford and

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Cambridge students (these last earlier in the story), the native population, artists, curiosity seekers—and has very neatly punctured some of the absurdities of their conduct. She writes in hilarious mood, but lays about her valiantly, belaboring the sensation mongering of the public and its ingenuity and persistence in getting what it wants; worldliness and other-worldliness; pseudo-literary aspirations and dilettanteism in art; romantic excitement and sentimental love, a dozen and one foibles or fancies. It is all good enough fun and sufficiently diverting for a stretch, but it is entirely undistinguished. The incident of the book is too often close to burlesque or too frequently commonplace, the characterization too superficial, and the satire, despite the fact that its thrust is often keen, on the whole too obvious, to make the novel one of any consequence.

A. L.

BANNER AT DAYBREAK. By Edwin Lanham: Longmans, Green. 1937. $2.50.

The last stand of the Paris expatriates in the early thirties is contrasted with the losing struggle of the Texas ranchers against depression and drought in 1934 in Mr. Lanham's new novel. Though the first half of the book is laid almost entirely in France, where young Clay Hall has gone to paint and remained to marry, the most memorable figure is that of old Amon Hall, his grandfather, who never leaves Texas. A family tyrant of the first order, all the forces of nature and the economic cycle are scarcely sufficient to force him into retirement. Clay and his wife after a period of difficulty on the ranch escape from his dominance and return to the rather doubtful freedom of New York. The dramatic contrasts in such a story are many and varied: Paris and Rutherford, Texas, two generations and two ways of living intensely opposed. The author handles all this material with intelligence, though he may reach no very fresh conclusions. The expatriate scene has been viewed with a less superficial eye, yet the detail is right. In Texas the author is obviously on his home grounds and glad to be there again. Above all, he is wise enough to concentrate throughout on the purely narrative element, leaving sociological and other conclusions to be drawn by the reader at will. All in all, a good piece of work, and an excellent sequel to "The Wind Blew West."

T. P., JR.

Erratum

By an unfortunate error, the price of "Mathematics for the Million" by Lancelot Hogben was printed in last week's issue as $5. The correct price is $3.75.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 157)

KATHERINE MANSFIELD: "LETTERS."

A new way of being is not an easy thing to live: I have to die to so much; I have to make such big changes. I feel the only thing to do is to get the dying over—to court it almost. And then all hands to the business of being born again.

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The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS: CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins

Run of the Market

AMERICAN BOOK-PRICES CURRENT, 1935-1936. Compiled by Mary Houston Warren. New York: R. R. Bowker Co. 700 copies. $20.

A formal notice of this annual would be as supererogatory as a formal notice of a doorknob. The present reviewer, having spoken highly of sequential units in the series for five years, begs leave to say simply that his respect for the competence of Miss Warren and her staff has no whit diminished with this sixth. He proceeds to offhand citation from the new volume:

Of the James boys, Will is leading Henry. "The Soft Side" and "The Sacred Fount," each inscribed to Conrad, sold together for $30. A presentation copy of "Smoky the Cowhorse," with flyleaf sketch, fetched $52.

John A. Joyce has made his first auction appearance. His "Peculiar Poems" (New York, 1885) brought $17, which would not astonish him a bit. He is the man who insisted (and probably really believed) that he wrote "Laugh, and the world laughs with you." He spent some time in an insane asylum and invented a perpetual-motion machine.

In 1869 Victoria Regina inscribed to the Czar of All the Russias a copy of her "Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands." In 1936 it brought $25.

Al Smith's "Up to Now" (large paper, signed), $55. Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Looking Forward" (large paper, signed), $10. The Raskob influence?

Huck Finn, America's ranking auction-room hound, put in twenty-six appearances. Best price, $400 (but don't quote us).

Condition fetish outweighing association interest. Examples: Pearl Buck, "The Good Earth," unsigned, $25; signed, $11. Sinclair Lewis, "Our Mr. Wrenn," unsigned, $32; signed, $17.

"A Shropshire Lad," three copies, $100, $135, $175 respectively, the last signed three times and containing four A. L. S. and a signed photograph. (To Alexander Woollcott: What do you mean a copy will take a person around the world?)

Five "Pickwicks" in parts, no one of them all that heart might desire, otherwise a higher high than $160. Three "Vanity Fairs," also in parts, and all considerably closer to the ideal—$3400, $3500, $1000.

Seldom cited: Parkman's The California and Oregon Trail" (1849), $120; Melville's "Clarel" (chipped, MS verse inserted), $100; Paul Lawrence Dunbar's "Majors and Minors" (1895), $15; Galsworthy's "Captures" (1923, authentic first issue), $525.

Not cited at all: Mary Webb, Nonesuch Press "Book of Ruth," Norris's "Yvernelle," Millay's "Renascence" on vellum.

Admirable example of an association item: A. Bronson Alcott's "Emerson" (1865), inscribed by Alcott to Oliver Wendell Holmes, $35.

Mussolini, "My Autobiography" (to 1928), signed, $8. Hitler, "Mein Kampf," nothing bid, nothing asked.

Robert Frost's Books

ROBERT FROST: A BIBLIOGRAPHY. By W. B. Shubrick Clymer and Charles R. Green. Foreword by David Lambuth. Amherst, Massachusetts: The Jones Library, Inc. 500 copies at $3.25. 150 copies, signed by Mr. Frost, at $7.50.

Robert Frost has made a few words go a long way. In principle, this fact should ease the path of his bibliographers. But Mr. Frost's reticence has produced a compensating impatience in his admirers, who, wanting more Frost books and lacking fresh Frost copy, have compounded new wares out of old goods—uniformly, one believes, with their patron's good-natured approval. The way of the Frost collector has thus become bedewed with such a spray of leaflets, pamphlets, broadsides, and comparable nugæ that the trail is hard to follow by very reason of the abundance of patrins.

His first publishers innocently imparted a hearty stimulus to this confusion. Both "A Boy's Will" (London, 1913) and "North of Boston" (London, 1914) appeared in such a variety of investiture as would have delighted the soul of Miss Flora McFlimsey of Madison Square. The distinctions are of far more than technical interest—the story of these variants is rather the record of the slow, durable growth of a poet's good report.

Like any soundly executed study of the life history of one man's books, this manual is more than a collector guide. Its concern is also beyond, or rather before, books, for it lists first appearances of poems in periodicals (extending back to the *Lawrence High School Bulletin* for 1890), first appearances in books other than Mr. Frost's own, Victrola records, prose (a department in which Mr. Frost is virtually inarticulate), translations and appreciations in foreign languages, and selected notices in periodicals and books. These schedules are followed by an admirable index of the poems themselves, the compilation of which must have been moderately onerous owing to Mr. Frost's frequent alterations in title between periodical and book publication. Of textual emendations, only a few are here recorded.

The Clymer-Green bibliography is expertly compiled, and introduces in particular one feature worth general adoption—the frequent use of illustrations as amplifications of the text. The Spiral Press of New York has co-operated intelligently in the present endeavor, producing a book to please eye and hand without giving the impression that here is something too ornamental to be useful.

Shirley Seifert's

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Reviewing Reviews

(*Continued from page* 32)

Journal for April. "I hesitated some time before deciding to put John Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men' into this column. It is not the kind of story that, a few years ago, could have been recommended in a woman's magazine, because the men in it, hired hands on a big grain ranch, are rough, uneducated, and very profane. One of the conventions which have ruled our lives in the past has been that decent women must not read stories in which the speech in general use by plain workingmen appears. It is a convention against which I have never had a grudge, because I don't enjoy foul talk any more than you do. But, although the talk in this story is at times really appalling, I hardly noticed it after one gasp at the beginning. There are two reasons for this: First, not one syllable is put in for effect . . . It all flows as naturally as breathing from these disinherited sons of man. Their hard and hopeless lives have given them no opportunity to learn any other form of self-expression. The second reason is that under this harsh, uncomely, indecorous surface, the story is so tender, so heart-breakingly sad, so exalting, that you cannot think about the language the men use. . . . It is a beautiful story with this one objection to it: If you think that the unconsciously, very naturally used bad language would be too shocking to you, you would better not try it. But if you can overlook that, you will find it a deeply moving little masterpiece."

Comment here seems superfluous. But we'd like to hear from SRL readers how they like "Of Mice and Men." Postcards will be welcomed—possibly even printed.

The Clearing House

(*Continued from page* 36)

for the practical traffic manager. It expounds rate making principles, the geography and handling of traffic, etc., and contains in addition to the references at the end of each chapter a general bibliography. Scientific questions seem to be the order of the moment, for here is a letter from *V. R. S. of Winston-Salem, N. C.*, asking for a "good, authoritative, elementary book on the plating of metals, particularly steel, brass, and copper." There are two books, either of which should contain much of the information V. R. S. wants—ELECTROPLATING (Pitman), by Samuel Field and A. Dudley Weill, which is a simple, up-to-date survey of modern practice including zinc, nickel, cadmium, and chromium, and ELECTROPLATING WITH CHROMIUM, COPPER, AND NICKEL (Prentice-Hall), by Benjamin Freeman and F. G. Hoppe, also a practical manual.

A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

MAN THE UNKNOWN. By Alexis Carrel. *Harpers.*

MY COUNTRY AND MY PEOPLE. By Lin Yu Tang. *Reynal & Hitchcock.*

GOLDEN APPLES. By Marjorie K. Rawlings. *Scribners.*

Stephen Daye · Spring Books

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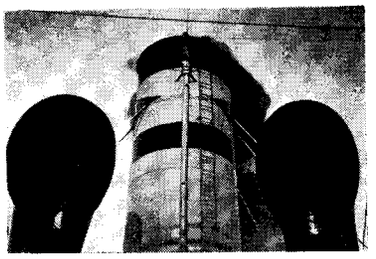

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Double-Crostics: No. 158

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

■	■	1-J	2-V	3-S	4-E	5-L	6-Q	■	7-M	8-N	9-T	■	10-F	11-J	12-W	13-R
14-O	15-P	16-S	17-D	■	18-R	19-M	20-A	■	21-G	22-E	23-H	24-K	■	25-P	26-F	27-B
28-W	29-E	■	30-Q	31-O	32-H	33-A	■	34-G	35-C	36-H	■	37-K	38-O	39-C	40-D	41-W
42-U	43-F	44-H	45-J	■	46-D	47-Q	48-C	49-E	50-P	51-K	52-L	■	53-T	54-E	55-N	56-C
57-I	■	58-A	59-G	60-O	■	61-I	62-N	63-G	64-H	■	65-S	66-A	67-U	■	68-T	69-V
70-M	71-R	■	72-B	73-O	74-C	75-F	■	76-M	77-N	78-U	■	79-B	80-W	81-Q	82-R	■
83-J	84-I	85-C	86-T	■	87-G	88-V	89-J	■	90-S	91-E	92-N	93-B	■	94-M	95-V	■
96-W	97-T	98-C	99-B	■	100-L	101-Q	102-S	103-M	104-O	■	105-E	106-A	107-B	108-T	■	109-N
110-A	111-G	112-H	■	113-N	114-G	115-V	■	116-B	117-P	118-E	119-K	120-J	121-U	122-F	123-H	■
124-M	125-T	126-P	127-D	128-H	■	129-P	130-H	131-C	132-R	■	133-U	134-O	135-V	136-T	137-R	■
138-G	139-J	140-L	141-O	142-K	■	143-S	144-J	145-K	146-H	147-C	■	148-K	■	149-P	150-N	151-B
■	152-S	153-Q	154-A	155-L	156-V	157-O	158-N	■	159-Q	160-L	161-T	162-V	163-S	164-D	165-K	■
166-A	167-N	168-O	■	169-F	170-N	■	171-B	172-C	173-M	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-three words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 41 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. English dramatist (1666-1726).

B. Unspeakably.

C. Poem by Thomas Moore (2 words).

D. Moves with an easy bounding gait.

E. Being at a distance from the center.

F. Empty-headed person (slang).

G. Parson in "Tom Jones."

H. Appearing glassy.

I. Cathedral town in England.

J. Contended in close fight.

K. Romance by Dr. Johnson.

L. Official residence of French Presidents since 1848.

M. Mediaeval mathematician (opposed to abacist).

N. Narrative poem by Burns (2 words).

O. Italian painter (1512-1594).

P. Instructs and improves.

Q. Bird of the family Hirundinidae.

R. Character in Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird."

S. Even if.

T. Versatile (comp.).

U. Book by Rousseau (1762).

V. Novel by Swinnerton.

W. Counter drawers for money.

WORDS

154 110 66 58 106 20 106 33

27 116 107 72 93 171 79 99 151

172 48 98 131 56 39 85 74 147 35

127 40 46 164 17

91 4 54 29 49 22 118 105

122 43 75 10 169 26

34 114 21 87 63 111 59 138

64 128 130 23 36 123 146 112 44 32

61 84 57

45 1 11 83 120 144 139 89

51 145 37 142 119 24 148 165

5 140 100 52 160 155

7 173 124 19 103 94 70 76

170 150 109 92 158 77 62 8 113 167 55

60 31 157 168 73 14 104 38 141 134

15 149 117 129 126 50 25

6 30 153 47 81 101 159

71 18 82 13 137 132

143 16 152 163 65 102 3 90

68 125 161 108 53 97 9 136 86

78 133 121 42 67

135 2 162 95 69 156 88 115

96 80 41 28 12

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

TWO events of the last week made big news in the booktrade. The first of these was the return by R. H. Macy to Macmillan of 35,900 copies of *Gone with the Wind*. The publisher has signed fair-trade contracts under the Feld-Crawford Act on this novel, accepting the return rather than agreeing to allow Macy's to sell their remaining stock at less than list price. Macy's had previously sold 170,000 copies of *Gone with the Wind*.

Second event: we learn as we go to press that Farrar & Rinehart filed suit on March 29 against the Literary Guild for breach of contract. The plaintiff is asking an immediate injunction to prevent any further breach of the contract, and in addition is asking damages of $100,000.00. At our request, Mr. Stanley Rinehart issued the following statement:

"In the past six months the Literary Guild has issued book club editions of three of Farrar & Rinehart's most important publications for direct distribution to bona fide subscribers. The three books in question are *A New American History*, by W. E. Woodward, *The Street of the Fishing Cat*, by Jolan Foldes, which won the $19,000.00 prize in the All-Nations Prize Novel Competition, and *Steps Going Down*, by John T. McIntyre, the American prize winner in the same contest.

"We have discovered that contrary to the Literary Guild contract with us, Guild editions of these books are on sale in certain book stores in competition with our own editions in those and other stores, and are not being distributed by the Guild to bona fide subscribers. We claim that the methods used by the Guild in these stores result in ordinary retail sales instead of written subscriptions.

"We have found that the public is being urged to buy these Guild editions in book stores in violation of the specific terms of our contract with the Literary Guild, and that as a result our firm has lost many sales and has suffered great damage to its business and reputation."

Certain kinds of silk-hat advertising irk peevish old Q.—for instance (in *Fortune* this month) a dressy fort-belvedere couple, surrounded by very randomhouse books, are presumably going to buy new and safer tires (for automobile). These tires, it is remarked, are "Built for those who would be missed in the community." ☞Whenever we pay taxes we get a grin by remembering a line we found in the learned Burton Stevenson's *Home Book of Quotations*—*Misera contribuens plebs* (the wretched contributory public) quoted from a Hungarian statute of 1751. ☞The great Huntington Library at San Marino, California, is interested not only in priceless folios, incunabula and treasures of old renown: it is now holding an exhibition of Contemporary Cartoons by American artists. Mrs. Milbank Johnson's introduction to the catalogue says the first political cartoons in an American *daily* were the anti-Blaine series in the N. Y. *World*, 1884.

☞Frank Monaghan asks an interesting question: what was the earliest book to contain a careful index? Can anyone answer? We remember that the Gutenberg Bible had index-tabs (marking the various Books) on the edges of the leaves, just like a modern dictionary.

☞Here's a charming note from Mary Virginia Kagey of the Student Bookshop at Randolph-Macon Woman's College (Lynchburg, Va.):—

"In looking over some old copies of the Saturday Review, so as to be sure not to miss *anything*, I find Q.'s question: Are the booksellers reading anything besides the Best Sellers? Willa Cather's new book, *Not under Forty*, sent me back to two old ones: Flaubert's *L'Éducation Sentimentale* and *Lettres à sa Nièce Caroline*, which complement each other to a remarkable degree. In the letters we read of the novel's progress from day to week, month to year, and many pages of the latter are strangely intensified by the knowledge of the research that has gone into them, though it is not evident on the surface. Flaubert's political prophecies, however, are discouraging. He thought the war of 1870 would not take place because the nations *could not afford it!*

"I have been reading, too, another book about Flaubert's country. It is *La Basse Normandie*, a very vividly clear, and yet sensitive, picture of the land and its people, written with humor and charm by Jean Canu, whose writings should be encouraged in this country because he is one of the few Frenchmen who really know something about America, having traveled all over the United States *on* a Rockefeller Fellowship and *in* a Ford car."

☞We like Macmillan's announcement of F. L. Lucas's *The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal*. "If you sat waiting for annihilation in a shell-hole," says the circular, "would you find solace in quoting from T. S. Eliot? from Ezra Pound? from Auden and Spender? from the Surrealists?" ☞It's hard to tell beforehand what quotes are likely to come into the mind in moments of agitation. One that pesters Old Q., provenance forgotten, is "Be's you got bugs? Sure I are. Everybody do." That, he thinks is of ecumenical purport. ☞We are excited by the recent outburst of books on mathematics: not only Bell's *Men of Mathematics* (S & S) but also Hogben's *Mathematics for the Million* (Norton) and another book by E. T. Bell, *The Handmaiden of the Sciences* (Reynal & Hitchcock). ☞Recently the quarterly *Scripta Mathematica* (which is published by Yeshiva College) held a symposium to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Descartes' publication of his Geometry.

☞Sumner Putnam, formerly advertising salesman of the *Atlantic*, who frequently sold space by originating ideas for publishers' ads, will be able to devote all of his time to that intellectual exercise after April 15th when he becomes advertising and promotion manager for Farrar & Rinehart. His duties will be substantially those of Ogden Nash when he was with that firm.

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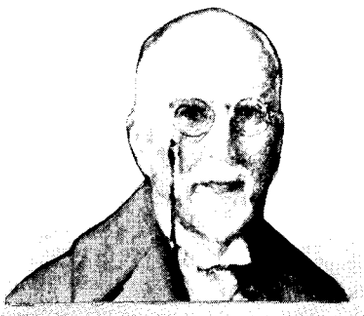

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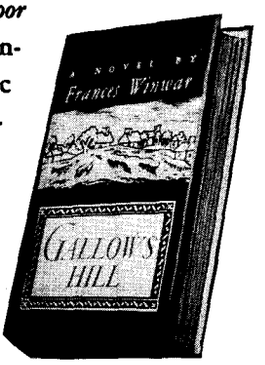

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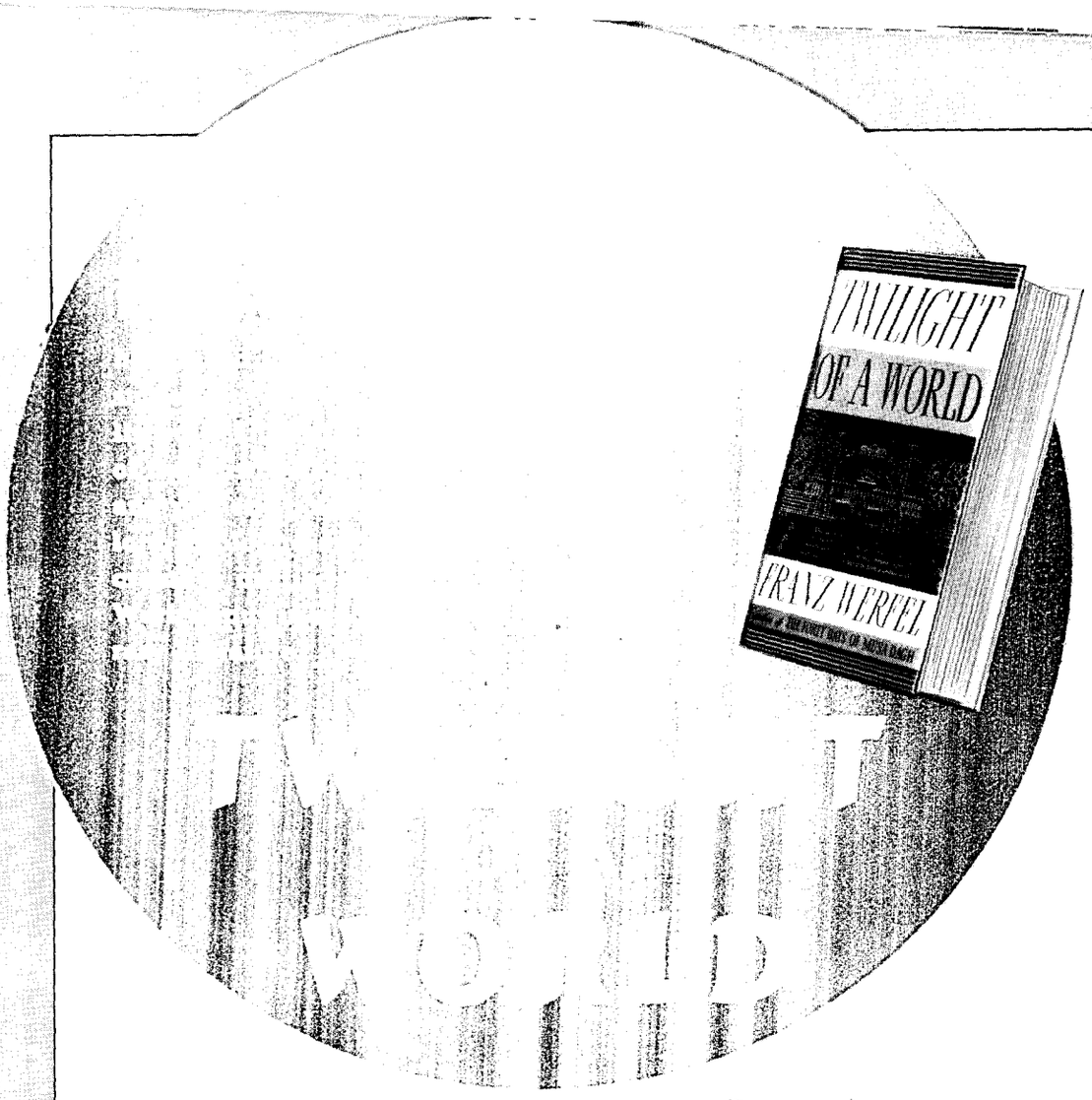

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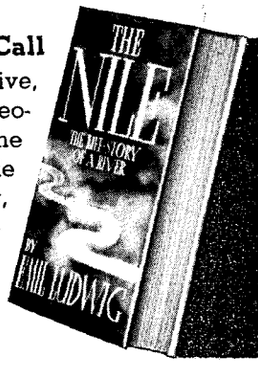

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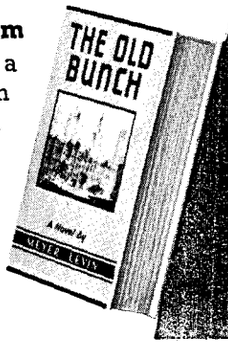

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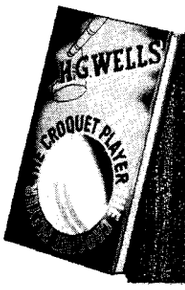

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